A litle Treatise called *The Image of Idlenesse*, conteining certaine matters moued betweene Walter Wedlocke, and Bawdin Bachyler, translated out of the Troian or Cornish tong into English, by Oliuer Oldwanton, and dedicated to the Ladie Lust.

Newlie corrected and amended.

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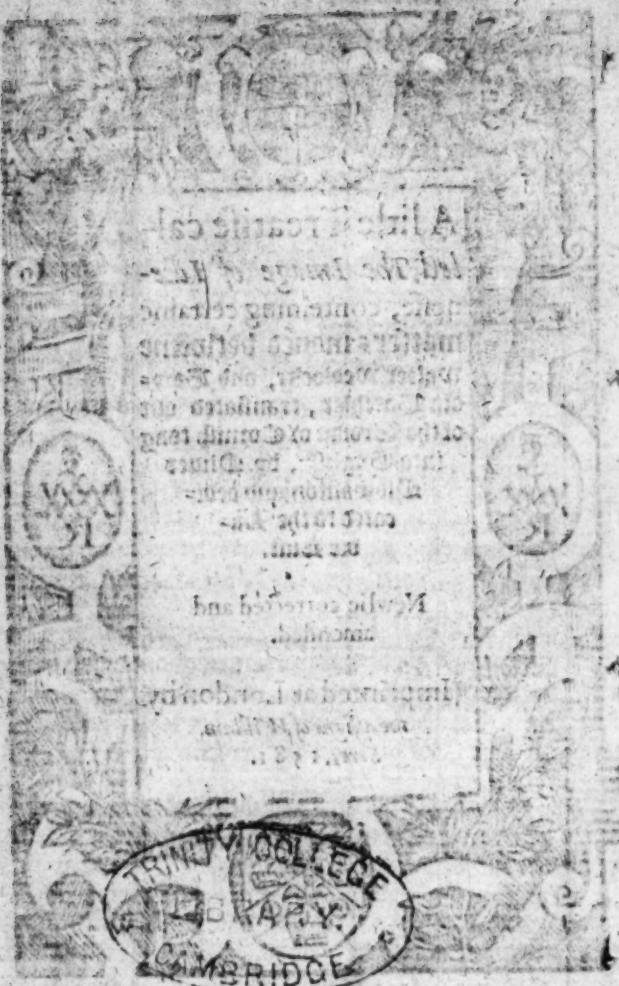
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The Table of this preſent Booke.

The Preface of the Tranſlatour. Cap. j.

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Bawdin Watchler being ſuter to a certaine Gentlewoman for mariage, writeth to a friend of hirs for to haue his helpe and furtherance in the matter. Ca. iij.

Whereas Bawdin had bene ſuter to a certaine Gentlewoman for mariage, and was in good hope to obtein: he receiued knowledge to the contrarie, by a letter from a Gentleman, that had bene partlie a meanes for him, and therefore wrote backe to the ſaid Gentleman, as followeth. Cap. iiij.

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Whereas a certaine Gentlewoman bare in hand that ſhe was determined neuer to marrie, and was neuertheleſſe likelie to be much ſued vnto for marriage, here Bawdin informeth hir by his letter vnder what ſort ſhee were beſt to vſe and giue ouer hir ſuter. Cap. vj.

Here Bawdin writeth to a certain Gentlewoman that was dangerous to be ſéene or ſpoken withal, by ſuch as came to ſue vnto hir for mariage. Cap. vij.

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Here Bawdin writeth to a certaine Gentlewoman his friend, among other things bewailing himselfe of his euill speede in woing and treatie of mariage. Cap.ix.

Whereas Bawdin serued in garison, and had compounded with a certaine Gentleman his friend, to repaire thither at all times of danger, the same being so straighted in a time of commotion, that he was forced for his safegard to take an other hold, whereas were manie Gentlewomen, which furniture the other greatlie wanted. Here Bawdin maketh him request to haue some fruition of that commoditie. Cap.x.

The answere made to the same letter. Cap.xj.

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The second part of the Epistle sent by Bawdin Batchler to Walter Wedlocke. Cap.xiij.

Here Bawdin to proue that women are neuer so much addict or bent to their owne will and opinion, but that by wisedome and good policie they may easilie bee broken thereof, sheweth a liuelie example of late experience. Cap.xiiij.

The third and last part of the Epistle sent by Bawdin Batchler, to Walter Wedlocke. Cap.xv.

Here endeth the Table.

To the right Honourable and his especiall good Ladie, the Ladie Lust of Pawesford, Oliuer Oldwanton your Ladiships bondman, wisheth a ioifull life and continuall felicitie.

The first Chapter.

CAlling to mind the opinion of Aristippus a certaine Philosopher of the Epicurians sect, who by profound argumentes and sundrie authorities, vsed to maintaine, that it was lawfull for man and woman at vacant times to exercise themselues with kissing and embracing (togither with the suites and ceremonies thereunto belonging) rather than to sit still and be idle. The same my iollie good Ladie, hath caused me so greatly to detest the wicked vice of idlenesse, that in eschewing thereof, I haue had sundrie deuises how I might most conuenientlie be occupied, and thereupon finding my selfe more apt than able for the exercise aforesaid.

And moreouer as well ignorant in anie craft and faculte of bodilie labour, as destitute both of learning and knowledge, whereby to inuent or set foorth anie worthie matter of new: I determined at length, because I haue vnderstanding in sundrie tongs, to take vpon me the translation of some worke into English, and for that purpose, perusing a number of bookes, I chanced to find a little quier intituled, The Image of Idlenesse, written manie yeres past in the Troian or Cornish speach, being the mother tongue of this noble Realme, then called Britaine, which made me the more willing to take the same in hand, thinking that it might drawe againe to memorie the valiant people of Troie, whereof for my part (be it spoken without aduaunt) I am one of the worthie offspring. But then came to my remembrance the wordes of Plato, who saith, that man liueth not chiefly for himselfe, but rather for his countrie, meaning that we should not applie our trauell or studie to our priuate pleasure or commoditie: but rather to the aduancement of our Common wealth, which this purpose seemed not to concerne, and therefore

might chance by some mens opinions ought not to bee translated on.

Yet neuertheleſſe, like as commonlie moſt men be not ſoone perſuaded to giue ouer the thing that they are affectionated vnto, vpon anie ſurmiſe or report, that the doing thereof ſhould ſtand againſt the rule of good order; but rather to inſtitute their cauſe, will ſearch for ſome colourable argument, to prooue that the ſame may ſtand within the compaſſe of order: Euen ſo I being bent to the tranſlation (with the helpe of my wits, which in this caſe fauoured my will) haue vnder ſuch ſort wreſted common reaſon, that in mine opinion being inough (as I ſuppoſe, for the diſcharge of mine owne conſcience) the doing thereof may well inough ſtand with the precept of Plato. If not indirectlie, yet at the leaſt way by a meanes which I prone as thus. To be a ſtudent of the Lawes, a Counſeller, or a miniſter in the Common wealth, is well allowed with Plato, and then to encourage or aſſiſt ſuch perſon in his ſtudie or miniſtration, muſt needes be of the like effect. And that in my mind ſhall be accomplished in this worke. For it is apparant vnto vs, that ſerious and ſad ſtudie which pertaineth to the gouernance and miniſtration in a Common wealth, is ſo contrarie to moſt mens nature, that if the mind be not recreated with ſome pleaſant matter, the wits will ſoone appall, and the liuelie ſpirits ware feeble or dull. And therefore it ſeemeth, that as it is neceſſarie to haue Students, Counſellers, and miniſters in a Common wealth: euen as neceſſarie it is that ſome men ſhould trauell to ſet forth ſuch matter as may renine their ſpirits, being mortified by continuall graue ſtudie, which otherwiſe as accloied and wearie, ſhould of force be driuen by vnaptneſſe to ceaſe in their ſtudie or miniſtration. And ſurelie Madame, the iniquitie of time is nowe ſuch, that the verie graueſt and moſt wiſeſt ſort of men (yea and euen they which haue miniſtration in the Common welth) will ſometime ſooneſt laugh and reioice to heare and reade euill of women: yet not as though being euill matched themſelues, they ſhould ſeeme glad to perceiue other men in like caſe, as if the euill were ſo common, as women are in great number, or that they thinke that they may by reading of bookes more ſafely remoue their wiues faults, than by expreſſe words.

But

But rather commeth as a certaine plague of lightnes or frenzie by the operation of some peruerse planet, or euil humor that causeth them indiscreetly to condemne themselues, by defaming their most naturall and best knowne parent. Like as if the Tareell would say, that his crier or damme were a Puttocke or Kite, which argueth himselfe neuer likelie to proue good hauke: and euen so it is of these mad men that delight to speake and heare euill of women.

Howbeit now verie shortlie, when the benewolence of the bodies aboue, there shall no more such occasions be ministred; I doubt not but that men will amend their misreports, and giue ouer such vnseemelie delectations. But yet in the meane season it shall be necessarie to serue the time. And therefore the matter of this translation being interlaced with certaine surmised faults against women, seemeth to be as an aid to the ministers in a Common wealth, to refresh with all their wittes, being as I said before, appalled with graue studie. So that whereas such ministers by their studie and trauell doe serue the Common welth indirectlie: euen so by this worke, which tendeth to mainteine and continue their wittes apt for studie and ministration: me thinke I serue the Common wealth bya meanes, so that my trauell herein may well inough stand with the precept of Plato.

And that thereby at the least way, I shall deserue as much commendation as the Smith, which maketh weel to tune the instrument: who although he be ignorant in Musick, is yet worthie of some thanks for the harmonie: by reason that and if his trauell had not beene, the strings could not haue beene brought to agree in tune, and then had there beene no melodie at all. But alas, a lamentable case to remember, how the follie and malice of man is increased since the daies of Saint John the Euangelist, who for his recreation after long praiers (as the discreete old wiues beare in hand) vsed to refresh himselfe in plaieng with his bird. And likewise holie Saint Anthonie in teaching his little pig to tumble and vault, and did not delight to heare and vnderstand of womens faults or doublenesse, as men do now adaies, which alteration by the opinion of some doctours, commeth by the influence of some disordered Planet. As in deede Venus of late to ad-

nance hir selfe, hasted hir ordinarie course, thinking to make hir ascendent aboue the head of Iupiter, but by a mischance she stumbled on Scorpio, & vnder such sort was tangled, that not onlie failed the aduantage of hir pretended purpose, but moreouer lost two degrees, & halfe of hir possessed preeminence, the reuolution whereof seemeth to be a great part of the cause that maketh manie women now a dates to stray out of order, and minister much occasion of euill report, as coueting to be accounted of higher estate and abilitie than in deed they are, or in making their beautie and comlinesse seeme more than it is, to garnish themselues with more sumptuous apparell and costlie iewels than doth appertein. For the maintenance whereof they abuse that part of their bodies, where as the signe Scorpio doth commonlie reigne, and by such meanes for a time serueth well their purpose, and doth increase their preferment and estimation. Howbeit, at length either by smelling or suspicion, they fall into mislike and obloquie of the people, and be lesse esteemed or set by, than when they first began.

But whatsoeuer the cause of such alteration be, either I perceiue that men are now so peruerselie bent to report and heare euill of women, yet for the reuerence and zeale that I beare to all women, I haue thought best bicause they may bothe redier with their answere or excuse, if any of them shall happen to be charged with anie of the faults or euill properties mentioned in this booke, for to make them first priuie thereunto, by directing of this my simple worke vnto your Ladiship, being of all honorable women in these dates (none discommended) as well for singular wit and good conueiance as for great policie and long experience counted most notable, not doubting but that all women, by your Ladiships good aduise and instruction, will be well able to defend or excuse themselues, whatsoeuer shall be laid to their charge, which chieflie hath boldned me to bring this matter into our vulgar speach, accounting it more honour for them to haue it come in question, and be well answered, than by silence to let it alwaie remaine in suspicion or doubtfull. In the furtherance whereof if it may lie in me, either by words or weapon, to do them anie seruice or pleasure, bee their cause right or wrong, I am and shall be both their aduocate, and champion

pion vnto my liues end. For doubtlesse, Madame, I had rather a thousand men should perish by seeking of their faults (if any such were) than that I would defame or condomne the verie simplest woman of your Ladiships train, by confessing of ought that might make against hir.

And for my trauell and good will in this behalfe, I do require nothing else at your Ladiships handes, but onelie that after this transitorie life, when your good Ladiship for your worthie workes in earth, shall be glorified in the celestiall throne of the Goddesse Venus, that I may be restored againe to youth, and made page of your Ladiships chamber, and that in the meane time it may please your Ladiship notwithstanding the debilitie of my bodie, yet for the mightinesse of my mind and skilfull practise, to admit me Captaine generall of your band, which I doubt not, what by mine owne policies, and what by the diligence and secret shifts of mine expert heraulds, and circumspect espials, so aduisedlie to lead and gouerne, as they shall escape all reproch and danger of their bodies.

And as for the safegard of their soules, because it concernneth not the charge of that office, I will refer the same to Frier Flatterer your Ladiships Penitencer, who for a smal portion of the spoile (as some folke beare in hand) will take their whole perill on himselfe, as best knoweth the blacke pronunciall. who long preserue your good Ladiship, and prosper your proceedings for euer and euer, Amen.

Your Ladiships bondman
Oliuer Oldwanton.

The first part of a certaine Epistle sent by Bawdin Batchler to Walter Wedlocke, wherein doeth appeare the ground that caused the setting forth of this Treatise.

The second Chapter.

GOodman Wedlocke, my heartie commendations laid apart, wher-as I perceiue by the report of Thomas Talker your Secretary, that ye say it is a shame for me to be so long time vnmaried, affirming that I despise and eschew martage, as a carefull and vnquiet life, being good for nothing else but onelie to bring sinfull people that can patientlie beare it to heauen by the penance thereof, as the verie selfe Purgatorie that manie learned men haue so long time contended vpon. Doubtlesse Walter I doe maruell much what hath moued you to charge me with so great an iniquitie: as that I should dispraise the blessed Sacrament of matrimonie, being instituted by God himselfe, the verie ground and summe of all goodnesse, yea & that is of such perfection, that if anie mortall man had inuented the same, he should thereby haue worthilie deserued immortall praise and fame, the groundes thereof are so commendable and necessarie.

For

Nor ſurelie I neuer had other than verie good and reuerent opinion of it all my life, and yet in deed Maiſter, I dailie ſee, and haue ſaid, that wedded men for the more part haue alwaie woefull and comberous liues, vpon groundes and occaſion miniſtred by their wiues. But for verie truth, by the default and negligence of themſelues, that do commonlie lacke either grace, or diſcretion to order & vſe their wiues as they ſhould do: which neuertheleſſe is not to be maruelled at, for ſurelie the right ſeate therof is a ſecret that God reuealeth not to all men, leaſt then they ſhould liue in ſuch continuall pleaſantneſſe and felicitie, that they would neuer willinglie depart this life: which by the opinion of the Vtopians, is a great ſuſperie of perdition. but as for me, indeed I haue the gift thereof, and therefore I aſſure you, haue beene verie deſirous to marie. Yet not ſo much for mine owne commoditie, as for that I would giue other men example how to vſe and gouerne their wiues in the right ſort, whereby to expell the inconueniences that I perceiue doeth enſue to the contrarie, but my chance hath not beene to obteine, for the diuel to empeach ſo good a purpoſe of quietneſſe in the world, by one meanes or other hath alwaies hindered my ſute, which is the verie cauſe that

I am so long time vnmaried, and for no such errour or euill opinion, as ye haue vntrulie surmised of me. For the more plaine declaration whereof, I haue herewithall sent you a note or copie of such letters, as with carefull heart I wrote before this vnto diuerse, to intreate for my selfe vpon mariage, which when ye haue perused, then will I declare vnto you further of my mind in this behalfe.

Here Bawdin Batchler, being suter to a certaine Gentlewoman for mariage, writeth to a friend of hirs for to haue his helpe and furtherance therein.

The third Chapter.

AFter my verie hartie commendations, ye shall vnderstand, that partlie for mine owne comfort and commoditie, knowing by sundrie meanes what ioies and felicitie there may bée in mariage: and partlie moued of compassion, perceiuing a number of men ignorantlie abusing themselues in ordering of their wiues (which by my good example might be reformed) liue in miserie and great vnquietnesse: I am vtterlie determined with all spéede to be a maried man. But yet not minding to bestowe my selfe so vnaduisedlie for anie

anſe haſte, as to chuſe a wife for couetouſneſſe of goods, or land, whereas my heart will not ſerue me to loue, and fauour the perſon: not for doting loue or fauour, whereas there is not ſome conuenient abilitie in ſubſtance toward ſuch charges as followe mariage: neither yet for both, whereas the age ſhall much differ from mine owne. Which things circumſpectlie conſidered, I iudge them all according to my hearts deſire, with a number of good conditions to be ioined togither in Miſtreſſe B. your kinſwoman, to whom of late I haue bẽ ſuter in that behalfe, and doe perceiue by ſundrie meanes that ſhe will followe your aduiſe. Wherefore ſir, I ſhall very hartilie deſire you to haue your helpe and furtherance therein, which to recompenſe (if my ſute take place) I dare bẽ bolde to promiſe you a thouſande thanks of hir part, for the ſpẽding of hir to ſo good a huſband, as by my demeanour towards hir I intend to ſhew my ſelfe. And yet for all that, I haue ſuch deſpaire and truſt in the matter, that do the beſt you can, I will wage with you fortie pound, that I get hir not, and on my fidelitie pay you truly if I loſe. I learned this wager of a craftie prieſt, that by ſuch a meanes with loſing of a little monie, wan a good benefice. Like as for my part I truſt in this caſe

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to leaſe; and yet be a gainer, as knoweth the maker of Matrimonie, whom I would gladly had somewhat interlaced the pleaſance thereof with some choler or bitterneſſe, for feare leaſt the continuall eaſe and quietneſſe that I ſhall find therein, ſhould happen to cauſe me to deſire, and forget to wiſh & worke for heauen, &c.

Whereas Bawdin had beene ſuter to a certaine Gentlewoman for mariage, and was in good hope to obtaine, receiued knowledge of the contrarie by letter, from a Gentleman that had partlie beene a meane for him, and thervpon wrote backe as followeth.

The fourth Chapter.

AFter my heartie commendations, yée ſhall vnderſtande that I haue receiued your letter, conteining a determinate nay in my ſute to the Gentlewoman ye wote of, which with a forced patience I am contented to accept accordinglie. And in perſwading my ſelfe the eaſilier to beare the ſame, do conſider that and if my deſire had beene granted, the one of vs ſhould of neceſſitie (being borne ſo farre aſunder) haue beene conſtrained to abandon and forſake our countrie and kindred, whereby might enſue to vs both more vnquietnes, than

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anie commoditie thereof growing, would bée able to counteruaile.

Whith this and like conjectures I am now faine to fæde my fantaſie, of intent to make light what lieth at my heart moſt heauie. The diuell I thinke, for deſpite cauſed me now (contrarie to my common wont) to tender ſuch ſute ſo earneſtlie: either elſe God hath appointed it as my penance, for that I haue oftentimes treated much of like matter, whereas in heart I ment nothing leſſe, which requireth by conſequence of equitie to mind much, and be litle regarded, as now it followeth. And yet to account indifferentlie, me thinke I cannot well aſcribe it to neither of them both, but all wholie to my ſelfe, that intending by policie to expell (as it were) a ſmart, haue conceiued a continuall ache. As thus, lamenting the loſſe of my verie friend hir late huſband, which to my heart was no leſſe ſorrowfull, than if mine owne life ſhould immediatelie haue followed, I thought that yet if I might get ſome commoditie by his death, that during his life time could not be obteined: the comfort of the one would ſo qualifie the griefe of the other, that it ſhould be the more eaſilie, and ſoner be digeſted. And therupon did conſider, that the moſt ſoueraigne iewell in this world (which manie

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men misse) is to haue a wife of commendable qualities and conuersation, whereof shée (as I had knowne by the report of him, whose iudgement being grounded on experience, was not to be doubted) did appeare to be one. And therefore to recouer hir as my recompense, was the originall and onely cause of my sute at the first vnto hir, which sithens by circumstances did encrease to such presumption of spéede (in mine opinion) that I accounted hir as obteined. And therewithall pacifieng my former torment, as counterpoised with the same, did reuiue my mortified spirits with the blossoms, whereof few men finde the fruit, and accepted hir in heart none other, but as a member or parcell of my selfe, which now being concluded contrarie, can to me be no lesse painefull than the losse of my hand, or anie other lim of mine owne body, the langor whereof is incredible to bée written. Thus doeth it now appeare, what it is to contend against the diuine purueiance, as in murmuring against the hand of God (which we little know for what well or wo it is ment) to go about the alteration thereof by worldlie policie, which for the more part turneth to our owne harme. As ensample by my selfe, that intended to auoid the smart that I haue doubled.

Wherefore from henceforth my counſell and practiſe ſhall be, in felicitie not to preſume, nor in aduerſitie to deſpaire, neither yet to employe our wits for to ſeeke the alteration of neither, but with humble ſpirit ſuffer the gouernour to proceede, truſting all to be for the beſt, as in deede for my part now in this extremitie and peruerſneſſe of fortune, I find the ſame by experience, for by the miſſing of my mind, mine affection is altered into meditation, wherby I doe conſider both his power and mine owne weakneſſe more than before time I did. And therewithall, as the beſt thing that I may perceiue to haue obteined by this my ſute and enterpriſe, I ſatiſfie my ſelfe, not thinking my trauell and good will to be ſpent all in vaine.

Here Bawdin writeth to the Gentlewoman mentioned of in the laſt Letter.

The fift Chapter.

BEcauſe I am loth to beſtow more kindnes on you, than of your part ſhall thankfullie be accepted, I haue me commended euen as heartilie and as often as beſt can content your mind, and none otherwiſe. Lo now may yee perceiue what a profitable and louing huſband

ye might haue of me, if ye had béene happie, for hereby doth appeare, that I loue not to bestow anie thing in waste, and yet the same notwithstanding to satisfie your fantasie, can be contented to giue you libertie ouer the treasure of my heart, to spend thereof at your owne will and pleasure. Further you shall vnderstand that I haue receiued your refuse concerning my late suite vnto you, which on the one part, bicause it doth so much contrarie my desire, ought not in reason to be a litle mine vnquietnesse of mind. But yet on the other side, considering that such is your will and pleasure, which I haue alwaies determined to preferre and followe aboue mine owne, I can but accept thin good part, and be contented therwith, and for the time will no more trouble you with anie further request in that behalfe, as in déede there is good cause why, for as I vnderstand ye are alreadie elsewhere promised, whereof God send you ioie. And as for my part, if reason to me do not the rather subdue affection, I intend to practise the common prouerbe, which saith, that new loue driueth away old sorrowes. But surelie it shall be done all by protestation, that ye fall not widowe againe, for if you do I will once more attempt you, whatsoeuer promise shall happen to passe me in the meane time, trusting

truſting to ſpéede neuer the worſe at your hands, though now for certaine conſiderations I ſéeme to take the miſſing of your good mind lighter than inward lie I fæle it.

Further concerning my deare friend your notable late huſband, like as it is not poſſible to recouer againe his bodie, ſo were it iniurie to ſuffer his deſerued good fame to periſh. For the preſeruation whereof I haue herewithall ſent diuerſe verſes in maner of an Epitaph, which I pray you cauſe to be grauen and fixed on his ſepulchre. And thus hartily fare ye well.

The Epitaph.

LEwis lieth here, ſo fell his fatall houre,
Wiething ſurnamed of Southwales the flowre.
In knowledge of the lawe worthie eternall fame,
In wiſdome and temperance coequall to the ſame.
With all good qualities ſhortlie to conclude,
And honeſt trade of life moſt plentiouſlie indued.
Whom cruell death (alas) in his xxxb. yeare,
Waſting of this world hath laid along on beare.
Waile his want Welſhmen to rath ebbed was his tide,
God ſend you manie ſuch and longer to abide.

Wheras a certaine Gentlewoman bare in hand that ſhe was determined neuer to marie, and was neuertheleſſe likelie to be much ſued vnto for mariage. Here Bawdin informeth hir by his letter, vnder what ſort ſhe were beſt to vſe and giue ouer hir ſuters.

GOod Mistresse N. I commend me vnto you, being right sorie that I cannot season my commendations with some heartinesse: howbeit, I assure you it is not left vndone for anie lacke of good mind, but onelie for that I am not as now maister of mine owne heart, and can therefore in nothing vtter any perfect heartinesse: yet neuertheless if it may do you anie pleasure to haue my heartie commendations, ye may be therein as it were your owne caruer. For doubtlesse my heart is with you, so that ye may vse the office thereof euen as ye list your selfe. And then hauing the heart after such sort, it may not be forborne, but that the bodie must nedes be at your commandement. And if ye doubt the contrarie on my behalfe, I pray you command me to doe what latelie ye denied me of, and then the truth will appeare. Further, whereas ye refused to accept me in mariage: yet not for anie misliking as ye say, but onelie for that ye are vtterlie determined neuer to marie. Surelie I account my selfe more bounden vnto you, for that gentle answere with your friendlie entertainment besides, than I should be to some other for the granting my whole request. And therefore if

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in anie thing I may do you ſeruice or pleaſure, ye ſhall be well aſſured therof. And as a proofe or earneſt penny of the ſame, I will at this time be ſo bold as ſomewhat to counſell you concerning ſuch matter as I ſuppoſe ye haue preſentlie moſt neede to be well aduiſed of, which is (ſith as ye ſay ye are determined neuer to marie) ſomewhat to ſhew you vnder what maner it ſhall be beſt for you to vſe and giue ouer ſuch as may happen to ſue vnto you for mariage, which kind of ſuters yee ſhall vnderſtand are diuided into three ſundrie ſorts. The one ſueth for loue of the perſon: another for loue of hir liuing: and the third are they that make of woing their paſtime or recreation: practiſing by ſutes at large done in ſport, how to faſhion themſelues, and to place their words againſt ſuch time as they ſhall happen to be earneſt ſuters in deede, and not meaning to marie, although their requeſt were granted, but rather ſcoffinglie to retreat, and diſhoneſtlie make their aduant of that they might haue had. The diuerſitie and diſpoſitions of which perſons it ſhall be neceſſarie for you to endeuour your ſelfe with all the ſleights and policie that poſſible ye may deuiſe to perceiue and knowe, and thereafter to giue them intertainment and anſwere.

For as to anie of the first sort, a suddaine refuse is death without redemption, and therefore vnto such you may not giue the repulse at first, but rather with an answere of double vnderstanding, by little and little quaile their hope of speede. Or otherwise, by counterfetting your selfe to be frowarde, or intangled with some other euill tatch, to make them thinke you better lost than found, so that they may rather seeme to giue ouer than to be refused.

But as for the second meinie (whereof God wote there are to manie) ye cannot vse them to euill. For surelie vnto such wretches, the verie torment and paine of hell (so that the poore soule were saued) is scarselie sufficient punishment. And therefore besides an vtter nay at the first, to shew them as much sullen strangenesse as ye can deuise, whereby the rather to bring them in despaire of speede, shall be but well done: respect yet somewhat to be had, that ye seeme not to take vnthankfullie that which is offered vnder a friendly pretence, and beware that in such case ye giue no credite to any creature that speaketh in their fauor or furtherance. For no doubt it is often seene that such fruites grounded on courtousnesse be so compassed with gold and gifts, that manie

times

times one friend ſelleth another, whereby both the buier and ſeller are gainers. But wo may be the poore wife that paieth for all, and yet is neuer the rather maried, for in ſuch caſe the goods be maried, and not the woman, and as ye may ſée by experience, either of them cheriſhed and ſet by accordingly.

But now to the third ſort of ſuters. Theſe eluiſh diſſemblers that I ſpake of before, when ye haue a little diuided them, which I would wiſh were done vnder a mild indifferent ſort, onelie to eſchew that ye miniſter them none occaſion to boaſt of any thing granted, and not to bring them in vtter deſpaire of ſpéd, whereby to giue ouer their ſute, and loſe no more but their labour. For that were no little penance, and therefore ye muſt in ſuch caſe when ye haue ſaid them nay, cõtercuaile your words with a louing lip, or friendly eie, as though not perceiuing their diſſimulation, ye ment them much better than ye ſpake, & therwithall to increaſe their affection, ye muſt intertaine them with port & faſhion, as ye ſhall thinke moſt to their contentation, which neuertheles muſt be done with ſuch demure ſimplicitie, as it ſéeme not to paſſe the bounds of womanhed & honeſt eſtimation, and vnder ſo good a waite, that yée ſéeme not in the ſame preſence to ſhew the like

grace and familiaritie to any other, allaieng by such meanes to make of such counterfets right Venetians, and then smiling at their smart, scornefully to giue them ouer, on my faith I thinke in conscience were none offence at all.

I write you these things as a warning, that ye recompense not the fainer with the faithfuller reward, nor marrie away your liuing, and remaine widowe your selfe for feare of repentance, as in daies past, and not thinking thereby the rather to allure you (although I be one of the first sort) to shew me anie grace or fauour. Yet nevertheless if anie such good chance happen me, being for truth on my behalfe not looked for, & yet much trusted vpon, I assure you, ye shall gratifie your selfe with such a good turne, as vpon the proofe ye will be sorie to haue so long time forborne, and so fare ye well.

Here Bawdin writeth to a certaine Gentlewoman, that was dangerous to be seene or spoken withall by hir suters.

The seuenth Chapter.

MIstresse B. after my heartie commendations, whereas ye vse to absent your selfe and will not be spoken withall, at such time as

I and other good fellowes come to treate with you vpon mariage, I can do no leſſe for good mind that I beare you, but to wiſh that ye would leaue ſuch demeanour. For I aſſure you, there are manie men that gather euill opinion thereof, and thinke the cauſe to be, that doubting your ſelfe to go with child, ye abaſh to be ſeene in anie preſence of skilfull iudgement. Howbeit as for my part, on my faith I ſuſpect no ſuch thing, but reckon ſurelie that ye do it onelie of intent, thereby to auoid ſuters, whoſe preſence and words might elſe happen to win you vnto wedding, by which you ſhould leaue your chaſt widowiſh life, and loſe the merit that in heauen is for the ſame ordeined. Howbeit, and if your meaning be none other than ſo, then ſith ye are ſo well aſſured in refuſing of ſuch requeſts, as before this I haue heard you beare in hand, better were in my mind that ye common thereof with as many as liſt ſue vnto you: for the more temptation ye withſtand, the greater ſhall be your mede. And yet bicauſe my learning in ſcripture doth not extend to diſcuſſe what bliſſefull reward may be due for ſuch vnnaturall and fruitleſſe penance, the beſt and ſureſt way for you in my iudgement, were to accept ſuch one of your ſuters to your huſband or familiar friend, as

ye

ye may thinke loueth you most hartilie, and in no wise to refuse them all, least hereafter ye repent as other haue done. For what merit God giueth to the chaste soules I knowe not, but it is verie certain that the Goddesse Venus punisheth right sharplie the bodies that are repugnant to her louing lawes, as partlie doth appere by the historyes folowing, which I tell you are not fained, but written by good authoritie in the boke of Cupids Saints, and be thus. There was sometime a knight named Parmalides, that loued most hartilie the Ladie Agglarose, who for no sute that possible might be made, would assent to his desire.

The importunate sorrowes whereof should shortly haue ended his wofull life daies, had not bene the great mercy of Venus, who by plain miracle, pitieng to see her faithfull Seruant so tormented with the crueltie of a merciles Ladie, made an exchange of both their desires, so that this ladie loued this knight aboue all creatures, and he to the contrary hated her beyond all reason, wherupō when she had long time followed him with many lamentable and pitious complaints requiring his fauour, and might not obtaine, died euen of loue. Lo thus ye may see Venus can wound hir disobedient subiects with their owne weapon.

There

There was alſo before this one Narciſſus, of ſuch beautie and ſæmlineſſe, that diuerſe women came out of farre countries onelie to behold him, whereof manie periſhed by his default, for he would in no wiſe incline to loue, which cauſed Venus to take diſpleaſure, and to puniſh him as ye ſhall heare. On a time this Narciſſus to go in a diſguiſing with other companie, happened to attire himſelfe in the apparell and garments of a woman, and paſſing ouer a bridge, perceiued in the water the ſhadowe of his owne comelie perſon and ſtrange attire, which him thought to be wonderfull ſæmelie, and therevpon for lacke of diſcretion to knowe himſelfe (which Venus withdrew from him) had no mind on his diſguiſed apparell, but iudged verelie the ſame to be one of Dianas Nymphes, who in ſuch like places vſed oftentimes for recreation in the ſummer ſeaſon to make hir abode, and therevpon waxed ſo amorous of his owne ſhadowe, that after manie humble requeſts of loue, and inſtant deſires of ſpæch ſpædleſſe, he determined to referre himſelfe to hir grace and mercie, ſaieng, that in ſo goodlie a creature, loue and pitie could not be abſent, and then with armes diſplaied leapt into the riuer, thinking to imbrace his Ladie (who alſo held hir armes a-

brode

brode of intent to his fond opinion, onlie to receiue him) and was there drowned. Thus was his crueltie rewarded with follie.

There was also not long agone in Genoa, bothe a knight and a Ladie, who for the excellencie of their persons and qualities, were of such fortune, that diuers sued vnto them for loue, and could by no meanes obtaine. For not regarding faithfull hart and good mind, they coueted so much high Parentage, great abilitie, that they thought none of their suters worthie to be accepted. The knights name was Malmerophus, and the Ladies Sillera, who at length by the appointment of Venus fell both into loue, and were amorous ech of other. Then either of them called to remembrance how many Suters they had suffered to perish by their obstinacie in loue, before time. And therevpon fell into despaire by remorse of conscience, thinking verely that in so much as they had so misused Venus lawes, Venus (from whome all grace to obtaine in loue, doth procede) would grant them none, although it were required and deuoutlie praied for. In somuch that the one of them neuer durst motion the other of loue, alwaies tormented them selues with inwarde desire and desperate thoughts, till at length this Ladie Sillera, in following

lowing the feminine nature, which of neceſ-ſitie muſt by ſome meanes diſcloſe their ſecret thoughts, wrought all her minde and opinion with ſilke in her ſampler, and ſone after died onelie of loue longing: whereof when Mal-merophus had knowledge, and wiſt of her ſam-pler as enraged for ſorowe, he ſtrangled him ſelfe therewith, and ſo miſerably ended. Thus for lacke of audacitie to diſcloſe their minds eche to other (which grace for their ſtubborne boldneſſe in refuſing of true louers before time, Venus withheld from them) they died all both at miſchefe, which if it be well noted, is a great enſample for other to eſchew like offence in auoiding the like or worſe puniſhment.

Wherefore I will aduiſe you to accept ſome one of your ſuters vnto your fauour, and to leaue this hardneſſe of heart in ſcorning their painfull liues. For doubtleſſe Venus is now of as great power as euer ſhe was, and as able to puniſh hir rebels. Yea, and although by hir godlie patience ſhe ſpare you a ſeaſon, vpon proofe of amendement, yet may you be right ſure ſhe will at length puniſh you with ſome diſpleaſure, if ye thus continue. Wherefore at your perill do as you liſt now that ye are war-ned, and thinke not that I write you theſe er-amples, of intent to preferre my ſelfe vnto

your

your fauour, albeit that to my iudgement I am he that most loueth you. For ye haue so often denied me, that I am vtterlie desperate therein, as shortlie will appeare by the end of my wofull life daies for sorowe of the same, which chance of all creatures ye shal haue most cause to lament. For thereby shall ye be sure both to lose a friend in earth, & haue a shrewd solicitor in heauen. For when Venus shall inquire the cause of my suddaine comming thither, then must I nedes disclose your obstinate demeanor in loue, which no doubt will be extremely punished, vnlesse your amendment may appeare vpon some other in the meane time. Or else and if your cruell heart be so stout that it will not alter for feare of hir displeasure and punishment, yet then let it alter in hope of hir grace and fauour. For doubtlesse shee is not so rigorous in punishing hir rebels, but that shée is more benigne and gentle in cherishing hir faithfull and obedient seruants. And therefore in all holie Scripture this is taken for hir posie or prouerbe, Loue and lacke not: and if that bee not inough to bring hir bountie in your credence, yée shall to affirme the same, beare of a miracle which in old daies shee wrought, and was thus. One Pigmalion (a verie cunning grauer or workeman

man in ſtone or mettall) made in Alabaſter the image of a woman, which was of ſo godlie proportion, fauour, and countenance, that on a time as hée beheld hir, hée was ſuddenlie taken with hir loue, and that ſo feruentlie, that he could not ſuffer to haue hir out of his ſight. Wherevpon hée bought hir coſtlie and rich apparell, and dailie would ſet hir at his table, carue to hir of his beſt meates, at after none reade before hir ſtories of loue, ſhew hir all his minde in ſecrete cauſes, and at night take off hir clothes, and laie hir by him in naked bed, greatlie bewailing hir deadlie dumbneſſe, and ſo continued a long ſeaſon, notwithſtanding the contrarie counſell of all his friendes. Which demeanour the bleſſed Venus from aboue right well beheld, greatlie commending his ſtedfaſt louing courage, and to recompenſe the ſame, on a Winter night as hée laie in his bed, well néere froſen with imbracing this colde image, ſhée gaue hir naturall heate, life and quickneſſe, ſo that they were afterwardes maried togither, and liued long time in bliſſefull loue and much ioie, till at length this Pigmalion died, and then was his wife turned againe into an image of Alabaſter, which to this daie ſo remaineth, and is accounted throughout

throughout all Greece their best and chiefest pilgrimage for to remoue or expel the passions & paines of iealousie, which for truth came first to knowledge and credence by this miracle. The princes of Tarent, (but after some bookes of Otronto) finding hir Lord and husband inbed with one of hir chamberers, fell into such a melancholie and pensifnesse, that in a maner she was at the verie point of death, and then being warned by a vision, to repaire vnto this blessed image for helpe, did auow hir pilgrimage thither, and receiued this Oracle (Marfoise thees duam Guisca ancorno rog hatre arta) being expounded by the Priests of that Temple to this effect in English.

If to weare the horne thou find thy selfe agreeued,
Giue him backe againe and thou shalt sone be eased.

Whereby both she, & sithence that time a great number of other being in like case haue beene wonderfully comforted & holpen, whereas before y disease was in maner vtterly incurable. And surelie all this is done by grace deriued from Venus. What creature then trowe ye may better spend their time, than in the seruice of hir that so beninglie rewardeth hir faithfull seruants? doubtlesse none. Wherefore yet once againe, as he that for all your vnkindnes shewed, can but wish you well, I will erhort

erbort you to enter and ſpend your life in bliſfull loue, which vnfeiled among worldlie felicities is the verie greateſt ioie. Howbeit, I ſpeake it not as hee that hath had any experience thereof, for alwaie it hath bene my chance to loue vnbeloued, which for trueth is the greateſt paine in earth, but yet the ſame maketh me perceiue in reaſon the bliſfulnes which may be in your loue, that are beloued: for of this I am certaine, contrarie circumſtance will haue a contrarie effect, ſo that like as my loue is painefull, becauſe I am not beloued, euen ſo muſt yours needs be pleaſant, becauſe ye are loued: wherefore enter into it hardly with a glad hart, and that ye may well perſeuere in the ſame, ye ſhalbe aſſured of my daily prayer, that ſometime truſted to be of like religion and now an abiect all deſperate, but yet not by mine owne default or deſeruing.

Wherefore my truſt is that Venus will take at me no diſpleaſure, but at leaſt way recompenſe my well meaning with the name of a Venerian, which ſhalbe a ſufficient title for me after this life, to challenge a tabernacle in her eternall throne. And now to conclude, if ye ſhall thinke me worthie to be imputed of follie, for that I dilate ſo much with ſuch painted proceſſe vpon ſo weake a ground or

matter, I pray you consider therewithall that the newe wine or other liquor, being in a close vessell will (for lacke of aire if it be not vented) swell and burst his caske. For euen so in like wise my poore hart being replenished with the anguish of affection and desire, if it should not thus by vttering of my minde be suffered to asswage and ease it selfe, would ouerswell with deadlie sighes & thortlie sever in sunder. And if ye be so hard of credence that ye will not thinke all these things to be true, yet then I shall desire you at least way to take them for your pastime in the reading, as I haue done in the writing, & so hartelie fare yæ well.

Here Bawdin writeth to a certaine Gentlewoman, at whose hands he had bene disdainfully refused vpon treatie of mariage.

The eight Chapter.

MIstres G. after my hartie comendation, whereas by your sundrie nates vpon the sute that before this I made vnto you for mariage, I was minded to giue ouer the same: Yet your gentle entertainment at our last being together, when as ye graunted to common with mee further therein at conuenient season, and after appointed with my seruant both

both place and time of méeting for ſuch purpoſe, made mée ſomewhat to renew my former intent, and to attend for you accordingly, howbeit yée came not, which cauſed mée (being then bound towards Troinouant) to ſende a certaine friend of mine to knowe the cauſe of your ſtaie, vnto whome (not anſwering the ſame) ye vnder a diſdainfull ſort vterlie refuſed mée, which was more than néeded to be ſpoken of at that time, albeit that and if your fantaſie had ſerued you néedes ſo to doe, yet méethinketh yée might haue done it with more temperance, and leſſe wordes, like as it is poſſible inough I ſhould haue done towardes you, if yée had granted my requeſt, in which caſe (on my faith) I am vncertaine whether I ſhould haue taken or left, for I neuer vſe throughlie to examine my ſelfe therein, till time it appeare I maie bée at the choiſe, and that neuer found I at your handes. But and if I had a gentle retreate, with thankes for your conformable good minde, had béene the leaſt of your recompenſe, and ſurelie no leſſe I loked for on your behalfe, ſpeciallie conſidering that women are or ſhould bée of a milde and gentle nature.

And yet maie chaunce that your meaning

therein, was better than to some mens iudgement it founded, as thus. Perceiuing that mine affection towards you was grounded on speciall good opinion, which I had conceiued of you, ye doubted least I should (euen to the death) lament the losse of such a faultlesse wife, so greatly desired, and therfore of intent to qualifie my griefe with the portion of my harme, ye haue right gently aggrauated the one to mollifie the other, and contrarie to your conuersation forced your tongue to declare you both stubborne of hart, suspicious of imagination, and inconstant of mind, that like as then all things considered, my losse was not great, so my sorowes ought not to be much. And if ye meant me so frendlie, I am the more bounden to thanke you, howbeit on my faith to say troth I needed nothing at all of any such consolations. For like as some men delight for to trace the hare, more to perceiue the wilinesse of her doubling and subtill shifts, than for any lore to recouer or bring home the game: right so in like wise for my part, haue I vsed such kinde of suites more for my solace and recreation, and to vnderstand the dealing and demeanour of some folks, than for any hope or intent to obtain the thing that I seemed to seeke for; as he that hath alwaies thought the pastime

passtime of woing to be much better than the penaunce of wedding, or and if it mishappen me at any time to be ouer desirous of spæde therein, and in conclusion be denied, whereby for lacke of good aduisement I chance a season somewhat to lament my repulse, then in making consolation to my selfe, I call to remembrance a number of mine acquaintance, that vpon obtaining in like suites, whereas they sought and loked for al such commodites as I haue iudged to be in you, when it came to the prose they had not onely miſt the same, but moreouer in the stead thereof, found the cleane contrarie with wonderfull vnquietnesse and displeasure, repenting their speed all their life after, and then straightwaies do reioice mine owne hap, and bewaile theirs, like as a man that hath escaped from a shipwracke, where many of his friends perished, and therewithall am cleane out of hand deliuered from all such thought and care, as though I had neuer knowen the partie, nor minded such matter. But yet for all these bragges, if it shall seeme vnto you by the manner of my writing, that I take ouer light the missing of your good mind, yet would I be right sorie that ye should by the occasion thereof, either set the lesse by your selfe (as to beleeue that in deede the thing is no

better worth) or yet to account me so ignorant, that I can not estéeme things somewhat according as they are, but rather thinke I pray you the troth to be plaine contrarie on both parts, and that I weare vnder such sort either as a common politeis, to set little by the thing that cannot be had, or els for that I doubt it might diskeine the grauitie which should belong to the number of my yéeres, for to be acknowen any thinge intangled with the affections of loue, although that in dede it toucheth me verie neere, or otherwise that I do it, bicause I serue in Garison and place of warre, & would by the bold bearing out of such a losse, shewe my selfe to be of such high spirit, and inuincible hart, that I will not séeme to be ouercome with the thing whereunto both the mightie and wise haue sundry times given place, wherby outward appearance of my weake and simple person, by counterfaiting the inward vertue, after the opinion of some men called magnanimitie (temperatelie bearing both felicitie and aduerse fortune) I may séeme better worthie to supplie the same or better rowme, and so to allay whether by the spending of my good mind vnrewarded, I may finde meanes to obtaine better estimation than I haue deserued, or at least way if I misse of them both,

yet

yet then to quiet my ſelfe with the hope of the one, although in vaine. For doutleſſe this tranſitorie life is entangled with ſo manie kindes of miſerie, prouoking penſiuneſſe, that vnleſſe a man ſometime will flatter him ſelfe with ſome kind of vaine glorie, or contrarie to the liuelie eie of his reaſon, delight or reioice in ſome one trifle or other, the calamitie and vnquietneſſe thereof will ſo fret nature, that none ſhall be able to liue out halfe their naturall courſe, and therefore although it ſhall ſeeme vnto you, that I might better haue ſpent the time than to make ſute, or thus to declare my ſelfe, yet be ſo much in my fauour I beſeeche you, as to thinke that it is done to ſome purpoſe or effect, and not all of follie, as in deede it may happen ye ſhall hereafter ſo perceiue at large, and in the meane time I praie you accept the ſimple verſes folowing, as my friendlie token, and ſo wiſhing you as to my ſelfe, both in lodging and otherwiſe, hartelie fare ye well.

The wiſe fathers of olde haue alwaies taught,
That we ſhould not ſhewe vnto our foe:
The penſiuneſſe of our ſecret thought,
Though in our heart we ſuffer deadlie woe,
But beare it forth as if it were not ſo,
For our diſcomfort ſhall cauſe him to be glad,
Whereas our will is for to make him ſad.

But reason alas in me is so appalled,
That I cannot vnto such counsell fall:
Though in my letter I haue right now assaied,
And falslie my selfe a dissembler did call,
Because that you my deadliest foe of all,
Should not perceiue my wofull heauinesse:
For well I wot ye loue at my distresse.

Yet folie now forceth me the truth for to expresse,
What so euer my letter doth containe:
Wherefore with wofull hart I openlie confesse,
How that your loue hath put me to such paine,
That with the life I may no more sustaine.
And if there be no grace but that I shall be ded:
Yet this shalbe my last, God send you well to wed,

Here Bawdin writing to a certaine Gentlewoman (his friend) among other things bewaileth him self of his euill speede in wooing, and treatie of mariage.

The ninth Chapter.

MAister D. after my very hartie commendations, trusting that yee are past the daunger of this late vniuersall sickenesse, the new sweat, these shall be to aduertise you, that euen so am I, and that with as much perill of life as euer man escaped: howbeit, all for the best as it hath chanced, for whereas before time by reason of mine age and euill diet, my complexion was plaine melancholike, mired with

with ouermuch choler, now by this meanes the vnkindlie heates are ſuppreſt, and all euill humours ſo expelled, that (the blood temperatelie allaied, with flegme hauing maſterie) I am turned to as goodlie a ſanguine as euer ye ſawe, and therewithall growne as full of loue, as anie nappie new ale is full of Barme, the crop whereof, much after the ſelfe ſame ſort (ſauing not altogither ſo high a loft) worketh, couetmg vent and vtterance, neuertheleſſe I am determined not to depart therwith, but onelie vnder the bliſſefull band of matrimonie, which holie and pleaſant ſacrament, becauſe I will neither rathlie enter into, nor yet baſhfullie (for anie refuſe at a few hands) giue ouer, I haue with good aduiſement made a kalendar of all ſuch maidens and widowes (in theſe parts) as content me that way, which in the whole togither, with an olde fellowes wife, that I dare ſay will not liue out this nert March, are to the number of xj. Vpon which appointment I haue not ſhewed my ſelfe to be ſo nice or daungerous to pleaſe, as to allow none other but onelie ſuch as are cleane without anie fault, for feare leaſt then I ſhould not haue ſo liberall a choice in ſo ſmall a circuit, and therefore conferring their euill tatches with their good qualities, I haue accepted or

reiected

reiected according to the more part or greater number, hauing respect therewithall of mine owne aduancement, that one profitable commoditie shall counteruaile two euill properties, vnlesse they be of certaine notable sorts, which are not to be borne withall.

And moreouer preuenting least my tender simple heart might happen to burst for sorowe of a repulse, if I should laie all my whole loue and good mind in one of them at once, and then be refused, I haue taken this order in my suite. When I am somewhat well entered in communication of mariage with the first, then after two or three meetings, and before I demaund to haue any direct answere there, I begin to entertaine the second, and when I haue noted in hir some one thing or other to my contentation that the other hath not, then straight waies I returne to knowe hir determinate minde, which although it be not agreeable to mine, I greatlie force not, for then I stand in hope to be as well sped or better of the second. And so proceeding in like maner with hir, I go to the third, alwaies retaining one within possibilitie of speede. Under this sort I haue alreadie perused vij. of my number, and yet feeding my fantasie with hope that the best is behind, my heart remaineth as fresh and whole

as

as when I firſt began. But yet by S. Marie, like as it ſhall be wiſedome to caſt the worſt before it fall, ſo I conſider that and if my fortune be ſo euill, that for lacke of ſkilfull intertainment I ſhould chance to faile alſo of the reſt, I doubt it would bring me into ſuch perplexitie and ſorowe, as I ſhall then neuer be able to expell: for dangers once growne to the extremitie, are ſeldome or neuer recouered: and therefore ſir, I ſhall deſire you ſo much to aſſiſt me herein, as to aſſerten mée by your letter, vnder what ſort ye vſed your ſelfe, vpon obteining in like ſute, that I may somewhat practiſe the ſame, wherin for lacke of power to recompenſe you otherwiſe, of this ye may be aſſured, mine gotten by your meanes, as reaſon is, ſhall be at your commandement, and ſo hartilie fare ye well.

Whereas Bawdin ſerued in garriſon, and had compounded with a certaine Gentleman his friend, to repaire thither at al times of danger, the ſame being ſo ſtraighted in a time of commotion, that he was forced for his ſafegard to take another hold, where as were manie Gentlewomen, which kind of furniture the other greatly wanted. Here Bawdin maketh him requeſt to haue ſome fruition of that neceſſarie commoditie.

The

The tenth Chapter.

The rather to allure you for to satisfie my necessitie, hauing presentlie a certaine kind of lacke, I haue thought good that yee should first be aduertised how well I intended towards you, if so were that for your part, ye had needed of me, which is none other but that my lodging was prepared to receiue you, and my force in readinesse for your defence, if yee had listed to haue drawne hither now in this dangerous time, according to the tenor of our composition and old band of amitie. My well meaning wherein, I craue not to be recompensed with anie gold or costlie iewell, but by your mediation, with the presence and fauour of some one of your faire Gentlewomen, (whereof, as I heare say, ye haue plentie and spare) of intent that being now forced to bee a man of war in verie deed, whereas heretofore I haue beene but as it were a shadowe thereof, I maie ware in loue, and be valiant, whereby the rather not onelie to withstand, but also to subdue these vntrulie and disobedient people that manace to assault this garrison, beeing a place I assure you, not onelie pleasant, and of great strength, both by building and situation, but also plentifullie furnished with

men

men, munitions, and all other things requiſite for the warres, that grace of amors onelie excepted, which beeing had kindlie of it ſelfe, and not delaied nor peruerted with the band of wedlocke is to a man of warre, as a ſpurre to a dull or ſlowe horſe. Or to expreſſe more liuelie, well neere as great an increaſe of bloud and forward heart, coueting by high enterpriſe, to obtaine honeſt eſtimation and fauour of his miſtreſſe handes, as dierie wedlocke, appalling the liuelie ſpirits, prouoketh cowardrie. And yet to ſaie troth, I haue ſometime knowne wedded men in warlike affaires doe right boldlie and well, but that hath beene by way of deſperation, chooſing rather to die, if fortune would aſſent, than longer to liue vnder ſuch yoke of ſeruitude, from the which our Lord deliuer you, and preſerue me.

The anſwere made to the ſaid Letter.

The xi. Chapter.

AFter my verie heartie commendations, theſe ſhal be to aduertiſe you, that I haue receiued your Letter, and by the ſame doe plainlie perceiue your faithful friendſhipment towards me, greatlie to my comfort and reioicing,

toicing, but not as who would say, for that now in extremitie and iust time of triall I should haue consolation to find my self in your behalfe assured of that, which before time I stode in doubt of, but rather for that it doth now erpiesselie appeare, that my wittes and iudgement, whereof before time I doubted, hath serued me aright in chosing such an earnest friend as ye are, coniecturing of you afore-hand, as iustlie hath followed, which to recompense with the best of my little power ye shall at all times be assured of. Neuertheless as to satisfie your request in that ye write concerning my Gentlewomen, whereof in deede I haue plentie and spare (as cause reasonable shall require) I can do you no pleasure therein, for as ye knowe it must needes be done by their owne consent, and resteth not in me to appoint, hauing no further charge, but to the defence of their persons. Howbeit, for truth I haue in your behalfe had communication with sundrie of them, as well Ladies as other, of whom I haue receiued sundrie answeres: for some of them say, that if your demeanour were good, it is likelie that ye might be accepted neere home, whereas ye are better known, and not forced thus to sue in forrein parts, and some say, that they are vncertaine whether of

both

both may be moſt miſliked, your crabbed face, or your croked conditions: and ſome of them ſay, that they diſdaine to take the refuſe of ſo manie, as heretofore ye haue béene ſuter vnto: and ſome alſo ſaie, that ye are ſo ſpent with age and trauell, that to the effect of their moſt næde, they thinke that they ſhould be but deceiued with you. This is as much as I can hitherto get at their hands, but that they acquit your gentle requeſt, with their hartie thanks, faithfullie promiſing to doe their beſt for your ſpæd elſe where, ſo it be not on anie of their friends, and in affirming the ſame haue herevnto euerie of them ſet their hands, & ſo right hartilie fare ye well, wiſhing that the lawes were of ſuch libertie, that euerie man might beſtowe his owne as himſelfe liſteth, for then I knowe where yæ ſhould for a time be well pleaſed, and your verie friend thereby much eaſed.

Here Bawdin replieth to the ſame, and perceiuing his continuall euill ſpeed, determined to giue ouer all ſuch kinds of ſuites.

The xij. Chapter.

IF I were ignorant of mine owne impediments and euill fortune, or forgetfull

of

of that I daille haue in remembrance, (which for troth, more than the number of my yeres, hasteth me to my graue) ye should haue done but well vpon the answere of my late letter, to expresse my faults and sufficient cause of refuse, at your gentlewomens handes, as ye haue done, and yet considering as the time now requireth, that we are of all sides forced to prepare & fashion our selues for the warres, wherein a bold and aduenturous hart (who neuer sheweth so well, as where there is a pleasant & amorous mind) resteth for a principall part, it should haue bene good policie for all men (in mine opinion) not onelie to dissemble and beare eche one with the follie and faults of other, least the contrarie might happen to ingender either froward controuersie, or feble pensifnesse, but moreouer euery man for his owne part to feed and flatter them selues with some kind of vanitie or vaine glorie, without hauing any respect to desert or not deseruing, which in deede dependeth much vpon the vaine trifles and toies of women, being a kinde of creatures, although scarse worthie to be accounted as reasonable, and rather an impediment vnto man vpon matters of grauitie or importance than any further. Yet to encourage battell and like mischiefe a very handsome and

wonderfull

wonderfull necessarie instrument, which was the onelie cause, the time thereunto now so requisite that I made request to haue some one of yours for to reuiue my dull spirits, being mortified with contemplation, to stirre vp and make the same more apt for feates of armes and chiualrie, altering euerie vertuous qualitie of the mind into some hodilie exercise of actiuitie or policie of warre. But now sith I perceiue my selfe by your writing to be thus euill accepted at so manie discreete Gentlewomens hands, and for so sundrie faults and impediments, as by them is alledged, I am become vtterlie desperate to obtaine in anie like sutes hereafter, and therefore to determine no more to attempt the same, but rather if I maie chance to escape the hazard and danger of these warres, to be professed an Hermit, and to liue alone in wildernesse. But yet for mine owne consolation in the meane time, considering that the thing which cannot be had, ought wiselie to be forborne, I thought it good policie to perswade my selfe, that their copanie is more combrous than comfortable, and for that purpose did delight to see and read such bookes as spake or treated anie thing to the dispraise or blame of women, whereas I found written as well by sundrie Philosophers, that knowe by

learning and naturall causes; as also by other sages that wist by practise and experience in maner and forme folowing.

First one of them saith.

That they are craftie cōuaiers of al maner shrewdnes:
And ignorant innocents in all kind of goodnesse.

Another saith.

Blame not all women though one haue offended:
Say well by the worst, the best may be amended.

Another saith.

Of that they may haue they set little store:
And what they can not get, they long for euermore.

Another saith.

Libertie they couet to doe what they will:
yet what they take in hand commonlie they spill.

Another saith.

What they be desired, they vtterlie refuse:
And what they be denied, moste greediie will they vse.

Another saith.

Abide by them and they are soone caught:
But out of sight and out of thought.

Another saith.

For to knowe diuers they alwaies loue:
Judging him to be best, which they neuer did proue.

Another saith.

They are discriers of counsels, antisaiuers of tables:
Not reckoning who rolleth his dice in their tables.

Another saith.

Verie may they be, but satisfied neuer:
Their voxe is inclosed in such kind of lether.

Which saiengs sound most, blissefull and comfortable to me, and as I trust will shortlie

so

ſo créepe into my credence, & temper my deſire towards all women, that I ſhal thinke the beſt of them to be better loſt than found. For ſurelie al old writers do throughly agrée as a verie ground or principle not to be denied or doubted of, that the greateſt felicitie and moſt pleaſant part of matrimonie on the mans behalfe reſteth only in the woing and intreatie of mariage, whereof the gods be thanked, I haue right largelie had my part, & yet was alwaies refuſed, which maketh me to thinke my ſelfe more happie than wiſe, y vnder ſuch ſort intoieng as it were the graine, & leauing the chaffe, I ſcaped the harme that ſo buſilie I ſought for.

The ſecond part of the Epiſtle ſent by Bawdin Batchler to Walter Wedlocke.

The xiij. Chapter.

LO Walter, now may ye perceiue how deſirous I haue beene, and what meanes I haue made to marrie. For although by ſome part of my writing I ſeemed to reproue or ſcorne ſuch as I was ſuter vnto: yet for troth I ment to intreate or flatter them, conſidering that women will oftentimes accept things cleane contrarie, and therefore I thought beſt to proue both waies, but all would not auaile me, for I was ſtill refuſed, which brought me

into such a perplexitie and pensifnes of mind, that I was well neere fallen into a consumption by plaine despaire and melancholie, accounting my selfe the most infortunate of all men, thus to lose with much trauell, what commonlie other folke get with ease, and to lament the leesing of that other men repent the winning. But such is the frowardnesse of fortune, that to comber all men, disposeth peruerslie all things, as a wife to him that lacketh skill how to guide hir, and none at all to the doctours of that science. Yet at length searching for mine owne ease, how best to quiet my selfe, I did consider how God minded to furnish heauen, as well of virgins as of martyrs and other Saints, iudging that he mindeth to reserue me in this estate onelie for that purpose, whereby to encrease my felicitie in the world to come. For I remember whereas Paule doth but barelie allow matrimonie, he commendeth virginitie: and therefore for mine owne part, sith this is mine appointed talent, I am contented to stand thereto, and from hence forth will seeke for no change. The most that grieueth me is, that wedded men can not now learne at my hand as I intended they should: for doubtles the mysterie of that doctrine can neither be disclosed nor perceiued

by woꝛds oꝛ writting, ſo well as it may by ſight of the doing, like vnto the common experience of holding the plough, which is not ſo ſone learned by repoꝛt, as by ſeeing the things done. But yet ſithens that now it maie be none otherwiſe, I will therein write partlie mine opinion, truſting that it ſhall take ſome effect, although not ſo much as I intended, if my ſute foꝛ mariage had taken place. There is a common opinion (and in deede experience oftentimes appꝛoueth the ſame) that the thing which is not well come by, pꝛoſpereth not with the owner, I meane to this effect. Men commonlie now a daies come not by their wiues as they ought to do, which cauſeth them to agree the woꝛſe when they bee togither. Foꝛ whereas they ſhould marrie foꝛ affection to the woman, and in hope of childꝛen to be bꝛought vp in the feare and honoꝛ of God: ſurelie (Maiſter) the moꝛe part of your ſect neglecting all, both doth make of mariage as it were a Foꝛhunting, which as you knowe is not medled withall, but when the caſe is ſomewhat woꝛth. And then the hunter after knowledge had where the game is, beſetteth the couert with viewers to courſe at aduantage, (if he may pꝛeuenting befoꝛe hand vpon diligent inquiris made, what rochet oꝛ bozowe it vſeth to reſoꝛt

vnto, as his chiefe refuge, and there at the entrie taketh it with a pursenet, when it thinketh to bee most out of danger, and so being with much craftie policie and trauell gotten, is caried home with gladnesse, by common presumption to plaine meaning people for loue of the flesh, but contrariwise within a verie short while the case is pulled off, and the carcasse not esteemed. And euen so it is of these greedie men that marrie for the loue of riches, without respect to the woman or hir qualities, who not onelie subborneth hir familiars for monie, in steade of hewers to be plaine liers, exalting the suter aboue all other men in such qualities or habilitie, as they shall perceiue the simple woman most to delite, or otherwise persuadeth hir vnder colour of Religion, as in sauegarde of the dissembliers life, that else would die for loue, whereas in deede he neuer loued other than hir liuing: but moreouer preuenteth hir at such handes as shee is most likelie to resort vnto for counsell, which craftie counsellour, although he mind to further the purpose, yet will hee not speake therein, for doubt to bee suspected of corruption, but when shee commeth to seeke his aduise, hee is then like a pursenet, and knitteth vp the matter

too whitly ſone after is repented. For the good man regarding none other but onelie the thing that hée chiefflie ſought (which was the good and land) eſtæmeth not the wife, and then ſhée finding hir ſelfe deceiued of the loue and good minde that ſhée loked for, caſteth to ſhorten his dates by anger and diſpleaſure; truſting to ſpæde better nert. And ſo mariages diſorderlie begunne, haue commonlie comberous continuance, and an euill end.

I make this little digreſſion Walter, to put you in remembrance againſt your nert mariage, if you come thereto, for ſurelie by that yée furmiſe that I haue an euill opinion of mariage, I ſuſpect that either you fæle the ſame diſcommodities your ſelfe, and that yée would gladlie haue mée to bée in like caſe: or elſe you are like to the grædie rich man, that is loth to haue anie poore neighbours, yet not for anie charitie that is in him, but rather for feare leaſt they would bée borrowers. What I meane hereby I doubt not yée knowe well inough. And now to the effect of my promiſe, which was to inſtruct you how men might liue moſt quietlie with their wiues. You muſt firſt vnderſtande (Walter) that notwithſtanding

all the euill properties and shrewd tatches that euer were written of women, yea, or that is in them in verie deede (which for truth is much more than conuenientlie may be expressed) yet are they not therefore to be blamed or found fault withall, by reason the same is giuen them euen of verie nature, whose gifts being in maner forced of necessitie, be they good or euill, deserue neither praise nor blame. For sith the time that the serpent tempted Adam and Eue, in the similitude and likenesse of a woman, doubtlesse the fraud and malice of that spirit, hath alwaies beene most incident to the same sexe, and maketh them naturallie inclined to dissimulation, inconstancie, and frowardnesse, with a number of other vices. But what of that? Should we exclude them from our companie as vnworthie? Or should wee disdainfullie accept them according to the common terme, as euil necessaries? Or should we being worst of all, as mistrusting that the Gods were not able to worke therein sufficientlie themselues, take on vs to alter them by art? As before this Virgil, whose presumption was preuented by death. For he, after such time as he had atchieued manie strange and defnse conclusions, enterprised to make glasse abide the hammer, determining to make all wo-

women conſtant in loue, and conformable to the will and pleaſure of their huſbands, and all by art magick and ſorcerie: nay, nay, gods forbid. And what then? Marie let vs conſider, that like as there is nothing in earth ſo throughlie good, but that to ſome purpoſe, and after ſome ſort vſed it may be euill. That euen ſo there is nothing of his owne nature ſo euill, but that to ſome purpoſe, and after ſome ſort vſed it may be good, and yet this hope we haue of women aboue all other things. The great God himſelfe vpon the creation of Adam (as appeareth in Geneſis) ſaid, Let vs make man an helper, and then made Eue, of whom all other women are deſcended, which proueth that being ſkilfullie vſed, they muſt néedes be helping and comfortable to man, for God neuer lieth, and then me thinke, conſidering that the matter toucheth the quiet of mans perſon ſo highly as it doth, it is moſt neceſſarie that men ſhould applie their wittes to ſearch out the right vſe of them, ſo as they may iuſtly ſerue the purpoſe that God promiſed, as in déede (Walter) for my part I haue done euen ſo, and that with a contemplatiue ſpirit, minding to liue with them in mariage accordingly, and do perceiue the whole ſtate and myſterie therof, being diſcloſed vnto mée by reuelation in my ſléepe,

which

which in effect is thus. Neptunedes the god of Patrimonie, for the consolation of maried men, vpon lamentable complaint of their miserable estate (by reason of their wiues crabbednesse) granted by a certaine branch of heauenlie influence, to distill into the heart of the bride at euerie wedding, a certaine kind of humour called by the Grecians Spurfalxe, being as much to say as the iuice or vapour of the Ring, and in English named a wiues tooth, a terme of long time knowne, and yet but lately and to few men perceiued.

The nature whereof is vehementlie to inforce hir spirits to couet preeminence in certaine points, which being obteined and alowed hir, it dissolueth the malice of all hir former euil qualities, much after the common opinion that one poison expelleth another. Hitherto (Walter) I suppose ye find litle cõfort in my words, for that it seemeth they are not by this miracle anie thing amended, but rather altered from one euill into another, which may chance is worse. Neuertheless, if ye note me well, yee haue right good cause to reioice, for hereby their crabbednesse, that by long continuance in manie discents was growne to be in maner naturall, and therefore incurable, may be taken away, and in stead thereof other things placed,

placed, that ye may eaſilie expell if ye liſt your ſelfe. I dare ſay you marueil what I meane by this circumſtance, and do long to knowe the effect therof. Well, I am content that you ſhall ſo. Surelie the preeminence that the wiues do couet at their huſbands hands by vertue of that humour, is none other but onelie to haue libertie in three kinds of things, which is, to ſay what they will, to haue what they will, and to doe what they will, wherein you knowe the huſband may eaſilie beare with them, and ſurelie doing ſo, they are the moſt quiet and comfortableſt creatures that euer were ordeined for man. But reſtraining them thereof, they are ſo crabbed and ſo comberous, as that there is nothing ſo diſpleaſant as their companie, which the diſcréte huſband muſt by his wiſedome conſider, and for his more eaſe, vſe them thereafter. For ſéeing that by the lawe they are all both but one bodie, and muſt remaine at one bed and bord, it is not in maner poſſible, that hée may liue long in quiet, when ſhe is throughlie offended. Wherefore it ſhall bée neceſſarie for him to vſe hir like as he vſeth other brittle things, as for example. If yée haue a verie faire drinking Glaſſe, it is both neceſſarie in vſe and pleaſant to the ſight, and will ſo continue long inough if it

be

be ordered accordinglie, but and if for rashnes or lacke of consideration, you force it more than the tender nature thereof may suffer, you suddenlie destroie your owne commoditie, for then wil it breake and be worth nothing at all. And surelie euen so it is of a faire pleasant and louing wife, which is the greatest treasure and comfort that a man may haue in earth, whilest she remaineth in that estate, and that will shee till hir dieng day, if shee be gentlie vsed, and left to haue hir libertie in these three things. For although they die of their owne accord to submit themselues inough, yet their noble hearts may in no wise suffer to be forced, nor brought into subiection by violence, much like for that purpose to the Hauke, whose nature of all liuing things they drawe nearest vnto, for the female kind of them is alway most stubborne, most egre, and most apt to euill, and yet by gentle meanes may be reclaimed & brought to do much pleasure. But the Falconer must beware that although shee chance to checke, or to sore alway and range, he may not therefore at hir returne mistreat hir with anie rigour, but skilfullie considering the cause, as lacke of bathing, or otherwise, must preuent to eschew the like, and so patiently suffering for the time, may reforme and win hir from hir wild and

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rammiſh nature, by policie and gentleneſſe. Much more reaſonable is it then that the huſband ſhould beare, and by ſuch gentle ſufferance qualifie the crabbednesſe of his wife. For whereas the one purpoſe ſerueth but onelie to maintaine his vaine pleaſure, the other toucheth him moſt highlie, both in the quiet of his perſon, and eſtimation of his name, which aboue all other things is chiefly to be conſidered, yea, and ſurelie (Walter) giuing them a face of libertie to haue their owne will in theſe three points, they may by policie be trained to doe yours, & in deede ſome of them will ſo euen of their owne mind and free will: Like as the hauke when ſhe flieth well, & ſtateth hir foule, ſerueth hir maiſters purpoſe, and doth him ſingular pleaſure, and yet meaneth none other than hir owne commoditie, howbeit both their delights being bent to one effect, are ſerued vnder one. Euen ſo, ſome wiues are wholie of like inclination as their huſbands, and then leeſeth he nothing at all by granting them ſuch libertie: for then, doing the thing that pleaſeth hirſelf, ſhe in likewiſe contented him. And ſome of them alſo are of ſuch worthie and honorable qualities, that they will ſhew themſelues in their benevolence, as it were able to compare with the great Alexander, who after

ſuch

such time as he had a dangerous battell with great perill of his person, and losse of manie men, ouercame the mightie king Perus, a certaine prince of the Indians, coueting naught els but onelie the glorie of victorie, & power to take what he list, receiued him afterwards into amitie, and enlarged his dominion with another kingdome of his owne. And euen so it sufficeth such worthie wiues onelie to obtaine the preeminence at their husbandes handes without setting the same in vre, but will rather of their meere and gentle nature incline themselues to the will and pleasure of their husbands. But indeede some againe are so precise in kepping their prerogatiue, that think if they doe anie thing wittinglie to their husbands contentations, they leese their liberties, and shame themselues for euer. Such wiues their husbands may neither manace nor pet intreate, but must compasse them by policie as thus. Loke what he would haue them to doe, let him seeme to couet the contrarie, for then thinking to serue her owne turne, she will serue his, or else let him get some guests to his table, that by waie of talke shall surmise some other mans wife, which dwelleth a farre off, to vse her selfe towards her husband, vnder such sort as the gentleman would

ſhould wiſh that his wife ſhould do, giuing her much praiſe and commendation for the ſame, and then will ſhee for verie vaine glorie to purchaſe like report, do in likewiſe: or els let him cauſe ſome of her Goſſips whome ſhe hath in diſpleaſure (as commonly they are neuer without ſome ſuch) to reioice and laugh her to ſcorne, for the miſuſing of her huſband, for then will ſhe amend onelie to ſpite her enimie withall. But (Walter) like as a crabbed colt muſt bee ridden with a rough bit, euen ſo if the wife be outragious, ſhe muſt be vſed after a more ſharper ſort, as thus: Let the huſband faine him ſelfe to be ſicke, complaining altogether in his hed, and thereupon ſend for the phyſician, with whom he muſt be at a point before hand, who at his comming, ſhall in open preſence make the matter light, and put him in comfort to do well, and then taking her apart, ſhew her in ſecret that he is wonderfullie inclined to a frenzie aſcribing him a ſpeciall diet for the defence thereof, which aſwell for daintie ſeeding, vnder pretence to ingender good blood, as alſo for gentle intertainment, for doubt to ſtirre vp the cholerike humors, ſhall be euen as the goodman himſelfe had before hand deuiſed, & if afterwards he ſhall perceiue her to breake auie part of the ſame, then muſt

he straightwaies seeme to bee starke staring mad, and among other light and vnwonted parts bee sure to beate hir well: and to inforce the matter, make as though he would leape out of the chamber windowe, but let not hir bee neere at hand, least shee happen to helpe him outward, and when he hath a while stormed in his rage, then let the Physicians come againe, and blaming the wife for breaking his order, seeme to pacifie him by medicines, yet first hardly let him be well bound euen after the right bedlem fashion, but let it not bee to straight, least finding him at such aduantage, shee happen to bee euen with him. And afterwards when hee is well come to himselfe, and informed after what mauer hee misintreated his wife, let him vtterlie denie it, as though he knew not what he had done in his woodnesse, swearing and staring that and if he would bee so lewd, it were pitie of his life, affirming that in all the world there is not so benigne and loiuing a woman to hir husband, nor that so little doth deserue to bee vnder such sort vsed. But at length, when by his wines teares, hir broken eie, hir blacke sides, and sore bones, hee must needes be persuaded that it was true, then must hee counterfet such woefull repentance, as though he should be straightwaies

out of his wit againe for pure ſorowe, wiſhing rather to die a thouſand folde, than to be vexed againe with the like paſſion. Let him vſe her two or three times after this ſort (Walter) and I dare warrant ſhe will for her owne eaſe obſerue the phyſicians order, albeit ſhe would diſdaine to do the ſame at her huſbands appointment, but the huſband néedeth to beware and handle himſelfe wiſelie in thoſe points, for and if ſhe chaunce to eſpie his fetch, ſhe is incurable for euer, like vnto the fox which being once tangled in a trap and eſcapeth, will be ſo circumſpect, that he is neuer taken by anie kind of engine afterwards. Sundrie other meanes and ſleights there is to qualifie the rigour of their libertie, which if the huſband do conſider and wittilie prouide for, their companie (be they neuer ſo euill) is tollerable inough. But (Walter) in any wiſe, and as you intend to eſchew the daunger of all their whole naturall malice, looke you ſwarue not from your principle, as to ſuffer them to haue their will in thoſe three things, or els at leaſt waie, ſo to vſe them, as they may thinke they haue it, for ſurelie the ſame is ſo incident vnto them that till time they haue obtained it, they are neuer contented, nor in maner of right mind, or tractable: and that once allowed them, they

are quiet inough, and framable to manie good purposes. Thus (Walter) I haue performed my promise, which was to instruct you how the husband may best vse himselfe to liue in quiet with his wife, I pray God all your sect may perceiue and followe it well, which I thinke they should do much the better, if I confirmed my doctrine by some liuelie example of experience, but that can I not do in ought that chanced vnder the yoke of matrimonie, by reason I haue had no practise that way, neuertheleſſe to make you vnderſtand that by gentle meanes and good policie, there is commoditie to be had at womens handes, which rigour or violence shall neuer obtaine: I will shew you an example whereunto I was somewhat priuie, that happened of late betwene a certaine Gentleman and Gentlewoman, both being of mine acquaintance, and was thus.

Here Bawdin to proue that women are neuer so much addict or bent to their owne wil and opinion, but that by wisedome and good policie they may easilie be broken therof, sheweth a liuelie example of late experience.

The xiiij. Chapter.

ON a time a Gentleman of the west parts (who shall bee nameleſſe) at Charing croſſe

croſſe in his way homewards from London (then called Troinouant) ouertoke a certaine faire Miſtreſſe, whom when he had ſaluted, and by communication did perceiue that ſhée ſhould ride foure or fiue daies in his companie, he was wonderfull glad thereof. For beeing himſelfe a cocke of the game, he thought hir to be a hen of the ſame ſort, and truſted well to haue ſome ſollie good treading by the way. And therefore after a little acquaintance, demaunded her whether ſhe could bée contented to anoint and vſe hir ſelfe as his wife in that iourney or not (which wordes neuertheleſſe were vttered vnder ſuch ſort, that and if his motion were not well taken, all was ſpoken but in ſport) whereunto ſhée diſſembling as though ſhe miſvnderſtood him, & the rather by ſome penſiueneſſe appearing in hir perſon, to perſuade him that ſhe was not apt to receiue ſuch entertainment, ſaid, that indéed ſhée had béene a wife, but as then was none, nor neuer would be.

And thereupon taking occaſion to ſpeake of hir dead husband, ſéemed as though ſhe would ſhortlie haue followed him for pure ſorrowe, which when this Gentleman by good exhortation had somewhat appeaſed, and then after a little pawſe recited againe the effect of his

former words, promising that and if she would shew him so much gentlenesse, he would not onelie beare hir expences, but moreouer, be glad to shew anie kind of pleasure that should apperteine to the duetie of an husband for the time. Whereunto she being then in a maner forced to make direct answer, with sober countenance said: Alas how haue I reioiced without cause? for whereas being a stranger in these parts, I thought it a comfort to meete with companie, the same to haue so euill opinion of me as to demaund such question, is most to my discomfort, and therewithall protested before God, that she was neuer woman of that cõuersation, nor neuer would be. Then the Gentleman leaning to his first aduantage, sware that he durst depose the same in hir behalfe, and that he spake but in bourd to passe away the time, desiring hir not to be offended therewith. Howbeit for all that, he intended not so to giue ouer his enterprise, but determined to prosecute the same by an other meanes, and therupon thought good to do as men commonlie vse to doe with sicke folkes (that for lacke of appetite) when they are asked whether they will haue this meate or that made readie for them, they vtterlie refuse it, whereas being a caudell, or other good morsell, if without

out ſuch queſtioning it be made readie and
brought them, the pleaſant ſauor or ſight ther-
of will prouoke their ſtomachs to receiue it:
therefore although being after this maner re-
fuſed, yet he thought if he might mēte hir in
conuenient place with theſe things in readi-
neſſe, he had good truſt to be accepted. For the
common prouerbe ſaith: that women loue
better to haue it, than to heare ſpeake of it,
and therevpon determined by ſome one poli-
cie or other to mēte hir warme a bed, and then
to proffer it without making of anie queſtion
or demaund. But firſt as the Phyſicians vſe
to giue preparatiues before they miniſter the
ſubſtance of their medicine: euen ſo bicauſe he
would the better be alowed when he came, he
intertained hir before hand with all kind of
gentleneſſe. For at hir Inne, ſhē lacked not
wine, ſpice, nor no other thing that he might
perceiue ſhē coueted to haue, nor no gellies, or
other confections that were good to make hir
cockiſh hot, or apt to receiue what he ment to-
wards hir, and by the way to helpe hir vp and
downe, or to amend any thing that was amiſſe
about hir, hir owne ſeruant was not ſo atten-
dant as he, ſo when he had by ſuch expences &
diligence, brought himſelfe in ſome credit and
fauour, then to giue hir ſome warning before

hand least she should abash too much at his cõming. Among other pleasant talke he shewed hir how hée doubted that hée was not well christened, for as hée said, hée vsed oftentimes to rise out of his bed in his sléepe, and going about the house, should doe he wist not what himselfe: and that when he were in such case, he might go whither soeuer he would, for there was neither locke nor barre, but would open against him, erhorting hir therefore, that and if hée should happen to bée vered with that passion in hir companie, and come into hir chamber by night, that shée should not bée afraid thereof, nor make none outerie, for hée vsed not to doe anie harme at all. At which wordes shée laughed and said, that and if hée came there, shée would so scourge him with hir rod, that he should repent his comming. The next night following (being in the summer time) they came to Salisburie, whereas this Gentleman determined to set in vre the effect of his deuise. And after supper perceiuing the Gentlewoman gone into the garden with the wife of the house, and hir seruant in the stable, leauing hir Chamber dore abroade, hée made his seruant priuie of his minde, and bad him locke fast his Chamber dore as though he had béene gone to bed, and then se-

creetlie getting into the Gentlewomans chamber, hid himſelfe vnder the bed, intending when ſhée were aſléepe, to get in by hir. And ſo deuiſing in his minde what a buſie night he ſhould haue, thought it good ſomewhat to refreſh himſelfe before hand, and ſo fell aſléepe, during which time there came into the ſame Inne one of ſir Ogier Penkeyls ſeruants, who when hée was alighted, perceiuing the doore abroade, came ſtraight into the ſame Chamber, and leauing his Capcaſe there, locked the Chamber doore, and toke the key with him: which when the Chamberlain perceiued, he made requeſt to haue it againe, ſaieng that hée could not lie there, for that the roome was otherwiſe appointed, whereunto the other anſwered, that the ſame had alwaies wont to be his Chamber, and there would he lie whoſoeuer ſaid nay, vnleſſe hée were fet out by the eares. Inſomuch that the Chamberlaine knowing him to bée a common gueſt of the houſe, and a froward fellowe, was loth much to ſtriue with him, and therefore ſhewed the matter to the Gentlewoman, ſomwhat blaming hir ſeruant for leauing the doore open, and deſired hir to take another Chamber, wherein ſhe was ſone intreated, and did ſo. And when time came gat hir to bed, and in

likewise the seruing man to his, all this while the Gentleman lieng vnder the bed fast asleep, and knowing nothing of this alteration. About midnight he awaked, and hearkening whether he could heare anie folke stirring about the house, heard nothing saue one softlie drawing breath within the bed, which hée supposed verelie to bée the Gentlewoman, wherewithall his heart tickled for ioie: which straightwaies was turned to high displeasure. For as he came forth from vnder the bed, thinking to vnray himselfe, hée stumbled on the chamberpot, and made such a noise that the seruing man suddenlie awaked, and vnder a rough sort asked who was there. When the Gentleman, cõtrarie to his expectation, heard a mans voice, he was wonderfullie abashed, but yet (coniecturing that it was the Gentlewomans seruant a bed with his Mistresse) hée boldlie answered and said: It is I, the good fellowe that haue ridden so long in your companie, (Mistresse I speake to you, although it be your seruant that asketh me the question.) And now to shew you the cause of my comming hither, the truth is, I suspected that ye were not so cleare of your liuing, as ye would séeme to be accounted by your wordes, for the proufe whereof, I haue purposelie watched you, and

now

now do perceiue what ye are. When the ſeruing man heard this ſtrange anſwere, not knowing what the matter ment, he thought it was ſome naughtie felowe that came to pick his purſe when he was a ſléepe, and that now perceiuing him to be awaked, would counterfet himſelfe to be a fole, the rather to haue his miſdemeanour borne withall, and therevpon leaping out of his bed to his weapon, cried out, Théeues, théeues, and made ſuch a noiſe, that within a while the goodman of the houſe, and all the other gueſts, brake open the Chamber doore, and with Torchlight and clubs came into them, and aſked what was the matter, whereof being aduertiſed by the declaration of the ſeruing man (who miſtaking the purpoſe that was ment, made the act verie heinous.) Gogges bodie maiſter Batchler ſaid the goodman, little néede had you to vſe your ſelfe ſo in this houſe, for by the holy Maſſe I would rather haue laid all the plate in my houſe to gage for you, than that yée ſhould lacke monie, if I had knowne it. Gramercie mine hoſt, ſaid the Gentleman, but to make you perceiue that I had no ſuch néed (the rather therby to iudge that I ment no ſuch thing) ye ſhall be priuie with my purſe, and therewithall opening the ſame, ſhewed forth in monie

and

and iewels to the value of xx. or xxx. pound, and then said: sith the matter is come to this point, I will now out of hand shew you the thing that I thought not to speake of till that Lent were come, that I should mete with my ghostlie Father, and therevpon (giuing monie to the residue of the companie to depart, and drinke a gallon of Wine for their paines) he toke the goodman of the house and the seruing man aside, and shewed them the whole circumstance of his purpose and intent, wherat when they had a while well laughed (erhorted him to vse more circumspection in the matter at his next lodging) they departed, euerie man promising to keepe counsell. Howbeit according to the common Prouerbe, which saith, that two may chance to keepe counsell but the third neuer. Euen so this matter was so long talked of in counsell from one to another, that before fiue of the clock in the morning it came to the gentlewomans eares, who although she were nothing in default, was neuertheless wonderfull sorie, to haue it reported that such thing was ment towards her, accounting that there might enter into the hearers thereof some suspect of her euill, which by anie honest woman should be eschewed, in maner as much as the very euill it self.

And

And therefore perceiuing that ſhe could not remedie what was paſt, ſhée thought yet to preuent what was to come, ſo that in the morning when this Gentleman ſent to know when ſhe would ride, ſhée fained her ſelf ſick, and ſo forſooke his companie, wherewith he was not a little offended, and thereupon imagining the cauſe of her ſtaie, determined to remaine all night at the next bait, which was Shaftesburie, thinking that when ſhée had once perceiued him paſt and gone, it ſhould not be long or ſhée would come after, and euen as he thought ſo it chaunced, for in déede the ſame night ſhée came to Shaftesburie, whereof although the Gentleman were wonderful glad, yet would he not be acknowen to her vntill the morning that ſhée were a horſbacke, for feare leaſt ſhée ſhould faine like excuſe, to eſchew his companie as ſhe had don before time. But in the morning as ſoone as ſhée was gone, hée came daſhing after and bad her good morow. Wherwith the Gentlewoman (béeing abaſhed) made anſwere and ſaid, Yea, are you there? had I knowen yée were no further paſt, I would not haue béene thus farre forth, that would God I had neuer ſéene you. Why ſo Miſtreſſe? ſaid the Gentleman, haue I ſhewed you anie ſuch vnkindneſſe, that

that you should haue cause thus to loath my companie? Nay said she, yée haue shewed me none, but rather the contrarie, what so euer ye ment towards me. But as the intent of euerie act deserueth the thanke or blame, so the pretence of your gentlenes tending to my slaunder (as now I knowe it did) deserueth no thankes at all.

As to shew you what I meane by these words, it shall not nede, for I am sure yee knowe it well inough your selfe, and in like wise doth all the countrie. What rumour for shame haue ye caused to be made of me the other night in the towne behinde, there is no other talke among the people but of you and me, wherein although for my part I did not ment anie euill at all, yet am I assured by your meanes not to escape slander, and therewithal gan pitiously to weepe. When the Gentleman perceiued the matter taken in so euill part, he was right sorie: but yet somewhat recomforted againe bicause she wept (for commonlie the spite and displeasure of a woman wereth awaie with her teares, so that when the one is spent, the other is past) & she then much more tractable to any frendlie purpose than afore, whervnto after a little counterfait coughing to be aduised how to excuse him selfe he thought

thought beſt, ſith by his doings in the matter were ſo apparant, that it could not be denied, that yet he would denie any euill of his part ment thereby, or of hirs receiued. And then ſaid, I wis Miſtres, wheras ye ſay that I haue cauſed you to be ſlandered, if ye vnderſtood aright, there could neuer thing chance better for the declaration of your honeſtie, than for me to come into your chamber vnder ſuch ſort as I did, for wheras it might be ſuſpected that there was ſome miſdemeanor vſed betweene vs, riding togither as we haue done, now that it is perceiued how I durſt not prefer to come vnto your bed, but by ſtealth and vnknowne vnto you, the ſame ſufficeth for your declaration in that behalfe, for all men may iudge, that and if ye had bene priuie or aſſenting therunto, I would haue come in more boldlie, ſo that in my mind there could neuer thing haue happened better for your purpoſe, than for me to do as I did, and as to thinke that I intended you any euill by my cõming, by the bleſſed God I ment you no more harme, than to mine owne bodie, wherefore good Miſtreſſe I praie you quiet your ſelfe, and be not thus offended without cauſe. No more harme than to your owne bodie, ſaid ſhe: No, I thinke well that: howbeit, what ſoeuer ye would to your owne bodie, I

am

am ſure thereby ye ment no honeſtie towards me. As I be ſaued ſaid he, I ment you no diſhoneſtie at all, and now to ſhew you my mind further, ſith the matter is come to this paſſe, on my faith Miſtreſſe I neuer in all my life knew what loue ment, till time I met with you. Why? and do ye knowe now what it meaneth? ſaid ſhe. Yes miſtreſſe yea, much more to my paine, than I haue as yet béene acknowne of ſaid the Gentleman. For doutleſſe your comelie perſon and diſcréete demeanour hath ſo drawen mine affection towards you, that without your preſence and fauour, it is not poſſible for my life any while to indure, and ſurelie to ſhew you thereof in ſecret, and ſomewhat to be ſatiſfied therein, was the onelie cauſe that made me attempt the comming to your bed, and for no diſhoneſtie at all as God ſhall be my Iudge. Well (ſaid ſhe) now I perceiue it ſhalbe an eaſie thing to proue you either a diſſembler or a lier, or elſe both. For and if you ſay you loue me and do not, then are ye a diſſembler, and on the other ſide, if ye do loue me and would come to my bed, as you ſay your ſelf to be ſatiſfied in loue, the ſame doth implie as much as to diſhoneſt me and therfore to ſay you ment me no diſhoneſtie, (though the terme bée rude) ye are therin but

a lier. Alas Miſtreſſe were then it your diſ-honeſtie that I ſhould embrace and kiſſe you a bed: ſaid the Gentleman. Yea but ment you none other thing ſaue onely ſo: ſaid ſhe. Why: no by the bleſſed ſacrament ſaid he, and if I did or do intend otherwiſe towards you, God let mée neuer light from this horſe in my right wits.

So that in concluſion with ſwearing and ſtaring that he ment her but all well, and partlie in recompenſe of the gentlenes and liberalitie ſhewed in the iourney towardes her, ſhe was contented the next night following to leaue her chamber doore open, and to giue him libertie with kiſſing and embracing to do his hart an eaſe. This thing ſo concluded, then brake they into other talke, that al their folks might beare to driue away ſuſpicion, and ſo with pleaſant thoughts paſſed the day, came the next night to Charde, whereas ſhe was lodged at the one end of a long Gallerie, and he at the other, and in an other Chamber which ſtood betwéene both, there laie another gueſt which was bound towardes London, and came in a little before them: one maiſter Iewgur a Gentleman of Deuonſhire, who béeing of the other Gentlemans acquaintance, ſupped with him in the Gentlewomans

chamber,

chamber, and after supper walked for recreation altogither into the Garden, whereas after a little talke, this maister Iewgur being a suspicious and wilie fellowe, perceiued by countenances that his companions coueted to haue some secrete talke, wherin to giue them scope, vnder colour to loke in a little booke that was in his bosome, he slacked his pace, but neuertheleſſe had his eares attentiue to their talke, and heard the Gentleman with a soft voice, say, Loke ye keepe your promise, or else ye slea me, and she to him, Yes, yes, but for Gods sake loke ye come secretlie. Yea, thought the other, then I knowe what you meane: well, though I be not bidden to the banket, yet may I chance to haue some part of the cheare, and therevpon repairing to them againe, fell into sundrie deuises, till at length a damsell of the house came to the Gentlewoman, saieng hir chamber was readie, and that if it pleased hir to go to it, she would bring hir to bed, whereupon the Gentlewoman departed, but the Gentlemen remained there as long as the day light would serue them to walke. And when night came, drew either of them to his chamber, seuerallie watching of a conuenient time for one purpose, howbeit the smelfeast had aduantage of the bidden gueſt, for by that name

will

will I from hence forth call them, becauſe he ſtood ſo in the way, that as long as ante Hirring was in his Chamber, the other had no ſafe paſſage. At length, when the ſmelfeaſt perceiued the houſholde a bed, and all things in quiet, ſauing in the hidden gueſts Chamber (for whom he was determined how to prouide) he vnraied himſelfe to his bare ſhert, and then taking occaſion to looke on his ſword, found faults that the ſame was cankered, and then deuiſing a meete place for ſuch a purpoſe (in the Gallerie not farre from the hidden gueſts Chamber dore) he ſet his ſeruant a worke with ſcouring therof, and in the meane time went him ſelfe to the Gentlewomans Chamber, whereas he found the dore open, and was friendlie entertained, but yet whether hée was ſatiſfied with kiſſing and embracing as was promiſed, or not, I ſomewhat doubt, becauſe it was not he that made the promiſe. And ſurelie the ſelfe loue of our vnhappie time is ſuch (God amend it) that wée ſhall ſeldome ſée anie bodie forbeare his owne commoditie, for the obſeruing of another mans promiſe, and againe, if ſhe thinking him to bée the ſame that made the promiſe, ſhould perceiue him to proſer further than was promiſed, yet were ſhé better to ſuffer in ſilence,

than to make any great noise in the reste, least it should sound in the ears of some (as indeed there lay Strangers neere at hand) that not knowing her simple meaning, would chinke her in default to suffer him come so neere. But what soeuer was done in the meane time, in conclusion, secretlie as hée came, so he departed, and she for her part supposing that she had honestlie acquited her selfe of her promise, determined for the residue of the night to take her rest, and therefore rose vp, and softlie locked the doore after him. So by this we may sée that this not to be marueiled at, though some men labour sore, and cannot thriue, and that some other doing nothing at all waxeth rich, for oft times fortune giueth one man the fruit of anothers trauelle. When the bidden guest who had long time walked vp and downe in his Chamber harkening here and there in abiding his good houre vnderstood all things husht and still, and that there was no blinch of candle light in any where appearing, then hée thought time to set forewards, and with trembling foote and hand, as though his life and death late in Ballance, did euen so, but when he came to the Gentlewomans Chamber, and found her doore fast (thinking then that shée ment onelie to scorne him) all his hotte loue

or lust (whether of both I may best call it) was suddainlie turned into rage and furie, so that with a sullen hart he returned back againe to his Chamber, and there tumbling on his bed, passed the residue of the night in great melancholie and displesure. In the morning the smelfeast departed verie earely without taking his leaue (as commonlie all men knowing themselues guiltie, will be loth to tarie long neere their fault for doubt of espying), but the bidden guest rode not till it was neere eight of the clocke, whom when he was a little in his way, the Gentlewoman with a fayned frowning countenance began to chalenge and said. A Sir, I can yée thanke, yée kept well your promise to night, a woman is well at ease to set her honestie in your hands, vpon any othe, (as who would say, ye had gone further than was promise.) Whatsoeuer thanke yé can me for keeping of my promise (said the Gentleman) I can your none at all for the breaking of yours, and surelie I am not contented with you, for ye vsed me verie naughtilie therein. Verie naughtilie (said she) I pray you why so. Marie said the gentleman, because ye made me watch a great part of the night, and to prowle about in the darke, promising to leaue your Chamber doore abroade, and did not so.

Then wist she well that she had béene deceiued, and searching for a womans shift how to saue all things vpright, suddenlie found one and said, why Sir? and were yée there in déed? and I ment to chalenge you because ye came not: yea that was I by the good Lord (said the Gentleman) euen at midnight, and found it fast locked.

Now by our blessed Ladie, said the Gentlewoman, then yée deceiued your selfe, for my doore was purposelie left open for you, marie there was another doore fast by it which indéed was locked, and of likeliehood for lacke of light yée tooke the one for the other. Now on my faith said the Gentleman, it was euen so sure inough, and ther vpon laughing at the matter, held her excused, determining to vse him selfe more circumspectlie the next night following, but in the meane time as the Deuill would, there came against them a kinsman of the Gentlewomans to guide her thither as shée was bounden, who conueied her out of his companie. And so by the craftie dealing of the suttle Smelfeast the bidden guest was disappointed of his purpose, which by the peruersnesse of fortune without any default in the woman, he could neuer recouer afterwards.

The third and last part of the Epistle sent by Bawdin Bacheler to Walter Wedlocke.

The xv Chapter.

By this experiment Walter we may (among other things) perceiue the instabilitie of womens determinations, and how by discréets diligence and pollicie, they may bée allured whereunto men list, be it good or euill, so that fortune be not bent to the contrary, as it séemeth she was against the bidden guests enterprise. If for indéede then there is no remedie, as before this the wife in excusing her selfe, when she was blamed for giuing her husband the lothsome liuerie, said that she could not do therewith, by reason that it was his fortune to haue it, and was thereby verie well allowed both of Iustice Pinder him selfe, and of al the whole court. But Lord God, Walter how rash witted am I become of late: for had I not chanced to fall againe into like maner, I should haue omitted one of ẏ chefest things that concerneth the purpose I treate vpon, which is to préserue the quiet betwéene man and wife. For lykelie by ought that I can perceiue, the greatest breach therevnto is when shée chanceth to lie with some other man, which thing the husbands in some countries vse to

take very grēeuouslie, and yet let the matter reast there, as in déede it might well inough if he were discréete, and then were ther no harm doone at all, for I haue knowen a number of men so vsed, and yet remaine as holesome in their bodies, as quiet in their mindes, and as sufficientlie furnished to all purposes as if it had neuer so chaunced.

What is it then thinke ye, that causeth their torment and distemperance? marie the knowledge thereof. Why and whose default I pray you is that? is it the wiues? Nay, nay God wot, but his owne that prieth to perceiue it, much like the mad man that séeketh for a knife to sley him selfe. Oh vnhappie plague, that commeth onelie by Sathan, for nature would haue it kept priuie, and therefore prouoketh to haue it doone in secret, nor God would haue it disclosed, and therefore setteth in the peoples hartes, neuer to shewe the husbande thereof, though it were so that all the rest of his Parish should happen to knowe it; and will he then him self séeke his owne harme, and make earnest of game? Well, and if he will néedes be so foolish, let him languish with the fruite thereof, and I beshrew all such as will mone him. It is me thinketh much like the eating of a flibbowe (béeing a certaine kinde of small

worme

worme that is often times found in could Mutton, and ſuch like meats, in the ſummer time) whereof although a man eate a thouſand (as commonlie men doo when they ſeede hungerlie, and loketh not for them) yet doth it no harme at all. But and if afterwards ſerching more narowlie, he perceiueth by them that are left, that in deede he hath eaten ſome, then ſtraight waies he caſteth his Gorge, and maketh a doo as though he were poiſoned; which for troth is not for any euil that is in the thing, but commeth onely of a certaine ſqueimiſhneſſe and imperfection of the ſtomach. And ſurelie Maiſter euen ſo is it in the other matter, yea, & in all both caſes, to thinke that it be ſo, is as much diſpleſure & vnquietnes of mind, as if it were ſo in deed, which declareth the imbecillitie of mans nature in that behalfe, and proueth plainely, that it is rather a vaine quarel of the mind grounded on no neceſſitie, than any ſufficient or effectuall cauſe of diſpleaſure. But yet Maiſter for all that, if yée bée one of theſe that cannot patientlie beare it, if it ſo chanced, then mine aduiſe ſhalbée that ye neuer miſtruſt it, nor yet make means to know it, for then I dare warrant yée ſhall neuer bée greeued therwith. Or caſt the worſt, as that ye chance to ſpy it your ſelf vnlooked for, yet then

beware that in no wise yée make any noise or words thereof, but kéepe it as secret from all other mens knowledge as yée can. For well wist the wittie Quid what discommoditie groweth by the contrarie, when hée wrote the parable how Vulcanus finding his wife in bed with Mars, transformed the shéets that they lay betwéene, by a certaine magicall means into a Gage or net of wire, and brought all the gods to wonder at them, who neuerthelesse, did but laugh him to scorne for his follie shewed therein, and estéemed his discretion the lesse euer after. Doutlesse a worthie example for vs to eschew the like misdemeanour, if we chance to come within the daunger thereof, for it appéereth that by so doing, we get nothing els but rebuke and shame. No Walter not so much as to let your wife her selfe perceiue that yée do know it, for then either will shée be abhominable bold, séeing you contented to beare therwith. Or els must yée thinke to breake her from it, make such a stirre and businesse as all the world shall wonder at you both, and surely much better it is to dissemble at the matter for a time, and abide the comming of age, who is the common amender of all such faults, to which effect I will shew you a notable experience that chaunced

of

of late, as was thus.

In the towne of Penborgh a certaine smith on a time came to the Prouost of the Colledge there, & told him that Sir Henrie Polmarghe a Préest of the same Colledge resorting much to his house vnder pretence of his Cosinage vsed his wife ouer boldly. Whervnto the Prouost answered, peace John, John, for I dare say it is not so, or and if it be, I promise thée I will cause him to leaue it. Nay Maister said the smith, I neither dout of the one, nor hope of the other, but my desire shalbée that your mastership for my poore honestie, will cause him to vse himself more circumspectly therin, than he hath doone, for yesterday as hée and I sat togither at Breakefast, maister Saghers man called me forth to shoe a horse, and when I came to the clinching of the nailes, I mist my pincers (béeing in my Hall windowe) which when I came to fetch, I found my wife and him interlaced vpon my bench vnder such an homely sort, that one my faith I was ashamed to looke on them, and ther vpon went back againe before they espied me, and borowed a paire of pincers of my neighbour. And sir aswel might there haue a stranger come in and shamed me for euer, as by my troth if I had béene certaine where my pincers had lien, I would haue sent

Maister

Maister Saghers man in for them. And sir because the matter touched me so néere as it dooth, I thinke it best for me to speake vnto them therin my self, aswell for dout I shall not kéepe due temperance in my words, as for sundrie other considerations, nor indéede I would not they should perceiue I knowe so much therein as I doo: and therefore good maister Prouost make none otherwise vnto him, but that yée suspect it of your selfe vpon report at large, for that shall suffice to make him more warie and circumspect, which is as much as I looke for yet. Nor sir I tell it not you, but as it were vnder confession, trusting that ye will kéepe it secret. If this rude man this smith that neuer read Ouid nor no other good Author could after such discréet sort temper his cause, much rather should they doo so that are of more knowledge and better lerned. And to you yée Venerian wiues, though yée chance to be narowlie taken, and charged therwith, yet be ye warie that ye neuer confesse it to the death, but speake & prate in your excuse to the vttermost, as though ye were innocent in the matter. For whatsoeuer the presumption or likelinesse therof be, yet of this ye may be certain, the verie effect resteth on so defuse and secret a point, that in maner it is not possible to be

plainlie

plainlie knowen, without ye will be ſo mad as to condemne your ſelues, and then farewell your good dates all your life after. Whereas by a little ſtout ſtanding at your defence with a ſober or circumſpect life following, yée ſhall ſone grow out of ſuſpicion, for this ye muſt vnderſtand, men are eaſily perſuaded to beléeue the thing, ſuch as in their hart they couet it ſhould be. And for your partes you Cupidian knights, ye muſt ſéeme to delight in ſuch paſtime and recreation as yée ſhall perceiue the goodman to do, whether it be hunting, hawking, gaming, or otherwiſe, for ſo may ye beſt growe into familiaritie with him, and colour your repaire to the houſe, to be onely for his companie. But then beware that your light demeanor diſcloſe not your ſecret intent, as the Wench that pretended her often going to the church to be all for deuotion, but when it came to the purpoſe, her affection ſo much ouerpaſt her reaſon, that ſhée ſet aſide the Par, and kiſſed the Parish Clarke, whereby her minde that before time was priuate to her ſelf, was made common to the whole Parish therefore ſée ye do not in likewiſe, & when ye liſt to reward your miſtreſſe with ſome Iewell or garment, looke ye make no gift therof, but léeſe it vnto her vpon ſome

wager

wager made in the husbands presence. And whatsoeuer the vehemencie or ouer boldnesse of her affection shall happen to be, yet be thou well ware that thou neuer disappoint or interrupt him at any such time as he shall mind to haue her attendant him self, for this is odible and willsome ingender suspicion, and besides that, in deed it is against all good curtesie, wherin the people of this realme haue bene accounted to exceede all other. And surely a cheefe part thereof, is to suffer the goodman (be he neuer so simple) to haue preeminence and cheefe attendance of his owne wife: notwithstanding, her friendlie familiaritie ment towards any other, being of better abilitie or more estimation, yet for my part not meaning hereby to excite or intice you to any dissolute maners or incontinent trade of life, but onely your selues being bent therunto, that therwith may be so conueied, as least rumor and inconuenience may thereof follow, in preseruing the quietnesse that I wish to haue continued betweene man and wife, which I chiefely do for the reuerence I beare to the pleasant sacrament of Matrimonie, because my poore Flasher was sometime accompted to be one of that band.

Do Sir, nor by Saint Mary I will not a now that such entercourses of yours to be lawe-

full

lawfull, for what ſo euer hath bene permitted vpon conſiderations in the former ages, or written by the Philoſophers or Poets of that time, yet I remember well we haue this familiar Prouerbe of authoritie: (New Lords, new lawes) and therefore may chance that by the comming of Chriſt, ſuch old rites and cuſtomes are abrogated, and then is there perill in the vſe thereof.

And alſo it ſeemed that the gifts claimed by theſe wiues from Neomenius, maketh not ſo much for their purpoſe as they thinke it doth, for indeede it is none other but onelie to make them couet libertie, for to ſay, do, and haue what they will, not expreſſing that the ſame ſhall bee lawfull for them, nor yet doth not diſpenſe with iniquitie thereof if it be otherwiſe. And ſurelie Paule to the contrary ſaith, that the husband is the wiues head, and that ſhee ſhould hold her ſelfe to him onelie, and be conformable to his will, & therefore aduiſe them at their owne perill, for if they chuſe the wrong way, I will not beare the weight thereof by abetting them therevnto. And now Walter to conclude with you, whereas yee haue vniuſtlie accuſed me, that I ſhould deſpiſe marriage, I truſt I haue both ſufficientlie diſcharged my ſelfe therin, and alſo giuen you enſample of a

Chriſtian

Chriſtian charitie as well in exhorting you (not withſtanding your railing rage ſhewed towards mée) how patiently to ſuffer the harme that cannot be eſcheued, as alſo in counſelling how the ſame may beſt be kept frō the knowledge and wondering of the world, which for troth is more paine and rebuke than the very euill it ſelfe, requiring no more at your hands for all my trauell and good will herein, but from hence forth to haue your good word, and yée ſhall bée ſure of mine.

FINIS.

...Y COLLEGE
...BRIDGE